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CREDITS

Reviewed:

42
CD-ROMs

CD-ROM

► PC ► MAC

INTERACTIVE

MAGAZINE

See Page 4
April 1995
Disc 7

Dark Forces Shoot Out
Playable demos of Dark Forces, Doom, Heretic and Descent

PLUS!

Mortal Kombat II, Premier Manager 3, XPlora 1, Noctropolis and
Wings of Glory for PC. Sim Tower, Mac Attack and Bloodbath for
the Mac. And a host of magnificent multimedia sights and sounds.

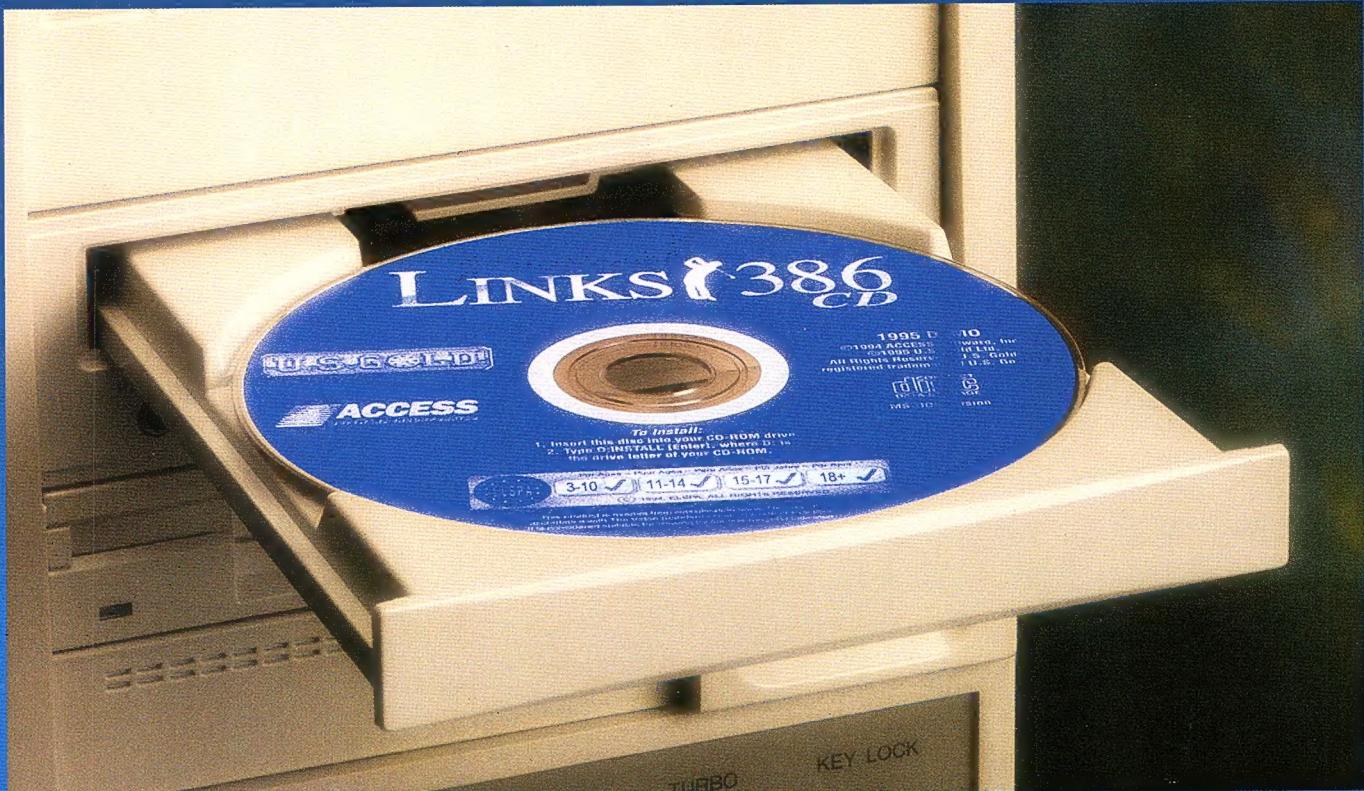
Smalltown Heroes
The making of an
interactive single



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April 1995
Price UK £4.95
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Printed in the UK
ISSN 1355-0659





‘THE PERFECT DRIVE’

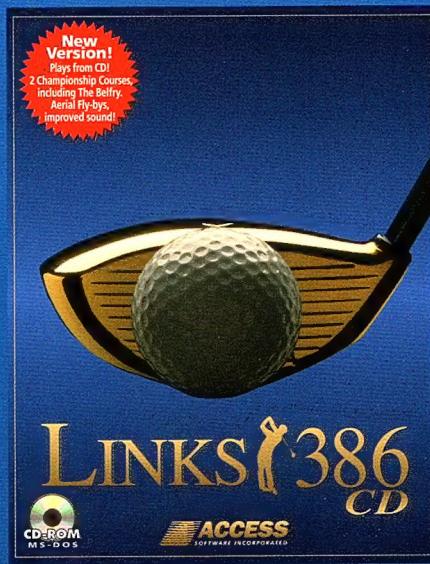


The perfect golf simulation deserves the perfect PC platform. Now the most award winning golf game in software history has been enhanced for CD.

The Belfry Harbour Town

The new Links 386 CD features Harbour Town Golf Links as well as The Ryder Cup venue, The Belfry.

Links 386 CD includes an entirely new digital sound system and



simulated aerial fly-bys of each hole, allowing you to assess the challenge from the air. All other Links Championship Courses are playable with Links 386 CD, creating a complete golfing experience.



The Perfect Golf Simulation, The Perfect Drive...



PERFECTION
PERFECTED



Minimum Requirements: 386SX IBM PC, 4MB RAM, 16MB Hard drive space, Double speed CD-ROM drive, MS-DOS 3.1, SVGA monitor, Mouse, Sound Card recommended. Screenshots are only intended to be illustrative of the game play and not the screen graphics which may vary considerably between different formats in quality and are subject to the computer's specifications. ©1992-95 Access Software, Inc. All rights reserved. Published by U.S. Gold Ltd., Units 2-3 Holford Way, Holford, Birmingham B6 7AX. Tel: 0121 625 3366. U.S. Gold is a registered trademark of U.S. Gold Ltd. The image of Big Bertha on the front of the packaging is used with permission of Callaway Golf. Big Bertha is a registered trademark of Callaway Golf.



Discography

NOW WITH A BRAND NEW INTERFACE!

It's the redesign readers have been clamouring for: CD-ROM Magazine Interactive is now available with a spanking new easy to use interface

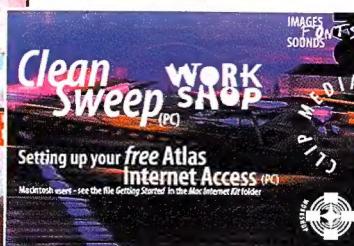
This month's CD-ROM Interactive...



Workshop

If you're the type of person that likes to get your hands dirty, this is a dirty kind of place.

This month Graeme 'The



Liquidator' Kidd, cleans up unwanted system files, using the demo version of CleanSweep included on this month's cover CD-ROM. This one really does clean

right under the rim.

For newcomers, we've repeated our step-by-step guide to using the free Internet software provided on the cover CD. This month you're going to have to tweak the software a little to hook up our brand new Internet server, so we've included Internet readme files for both PC (in the atlas directory) and Mac (in the Internet Kit folder).

Then once you've weaned yourself off the information superhighway, why not check out the raft of clip-art images (supplied by PhotoDisc) and sounds (provided by NoHo Digital) in our clip media sampler.

Videodrome

Here you'll find a selection of clips from the very



Gallery

This month Dark Forces shoots it out with the best

of the rest of the Doom clones. Check out our interactive feature in the Gallery, and then try the demos for yourself by firing up our special Doomathon browser. We also take you backstage to meet a smalltown band that is launching its debut single on CD-ROM. Look out too for a sneak preview of the playable PC and Mac demos you'll find in the Gallery folder of this month's cover CD.



latest music and movie VideoCDs. This month we've got standout cuts from One Deadly Summer, The Navigator, Haxan, Tender and Perverse, Female Vampire aka The Bare-breasted Countess, and This is Video Clash.

To start a video, click on one of the six clip icons along the top of the screen.



CD-ROM Heaven

CD-ROM Heaven is the place where we tuck away the multimedia reviews of our favourite discs from last month's issue. Just click on the sides of the screen to move around the room, or click on a graphic to watch a narrated slideshow.

This month, our hats are aloft to Wacky Races, Alone in the Dark 3, Discworld, Magic Eye, This is Spinal Tap, System Shock, Vietnam, Kings Quest VII and SpaceAGE. Listen out too for an excerpt from the Squidgate tapes, courtesy of People Weekly.

Feedback

This is where we hand the disc over to you. If you fancy a chat, a good old rant or simply want to send us a video postcard of your Afghan mohican, this is the place to do it. The feedback icon is at the bottom left hand corner of the screen. If you want to be on the wall next month, drop us a line by snail mail, e-mail, fax or floppy.



SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

Mac

CPU: LCII (68030) or greater with 4Mb RAM (8Mb recommended), **CD-ROM Drive:** Double speed (300Kb/sec) or faster, **Graphics:** 640x480, 256 colours required, **Sound card:** 8-bit MPC compatible sound card, **Software:** Windows 3.1 or later, QuickTime for Windows 1.1 (supplied on disc)

PC

CPU: Fast 386 CPU or greater with 4Mb RAM, **CD-ROM drive:** Double-speed (300Kb/sec) or faster, **Graphics:** 640x480, 256 colours required, **Sound card:** 8-bit MPC compatible sound card, **Software:** Windows 3.1 or later, QuickTime for Windows 1.1 (supplied on disc)



Playable PC demos

DARK FORCES is the hottest Doomalike on the market. But how does it compare with the best of the other Doom clones, or the original gorefest itself?

This month, we've compiled demos of Dark Forces, Doom, and two other great clones, all of which have something new to offer the genre. To test these games head to head, click on the DOOMathon picture at the bottom of the DOSDEMOS menu, and then click on RUN – this takes you to a new page, from where you can select Dark Forces, Doom, Descent or Heretic.

Dark Forces

(Virgin Interactive 0181 960 225)

What can we say about this game? Quite a lot actually – you'll find at least 1,200 words on pages 80, 81 and 82 for a start. But the review score really says it all – five out of five. Make no mistake, Dark Forces is a CD-ROM Classic.

But don't take our word for it – try it for yourself. The demo level is exactly the same as the first level from the full game and includes some excellent cut-scenes, lots of secrets, some pretty cool hardware and awesome bad guys. The demo requires just 500k to be copied to your hard disk. Select INSTALL from the DOSDEMOS program, and you'll be asked to select a destination directory. Set-up your sound card and read the instructions. Select run from LucasArts' menu to play now, or DFDEMO from the newly installed directory to run later.

Doom

(Id Software 0800 834619)

The original, but still the best? Some would say so. This is version 1.8 – the latest (and last) revision (if you don't count the 1.9 patch). Bugs have been fixed and there's a new menu system.]

To run, select INSTALL from the DOSDEMOS program. You'll be asked to choose a directory where 5Mb will be copied to. Then it's on to the main set-up menu. To play at a later date, type DOOM, or DM for a multi-player blast.



Heretic

(Id Software 0800 834619)

The result of a collaboration between Id Software and Raven. Take Doom, add a fantasy element, with the ability to look up and down and even fly, and you'll get an idea of what this is about. Watch out for a review of the CD-ROM version when it's released in a couple of months.



To play, select INSTALL from the DOSDEMOS program. This copies 8Mb to your hard disk in a directory called \HERETIC. You'll now be presented with the main menu, from where you can set-up your sound card. To play at a later date run HERETIC, or DM for multi-player games.

DOS-BASED DEMOS

You can install and/or run any of the DOS-based PC demos on our cover disc by running a simple menu program called, simply, DOSDEMOS. You'll find this in the root directory of the disc.

Click a mouse button to remove the title screen and you'll see a screen shot of each of this month's featured demos – Mortal Kombat II, Psycho Pinball, Wings Of Glory and Premier Manager III along a special hot spot that takes you to a separate menu for the DOOMathon outlined below.

Click on one of the pictures to see the available options for each program. Then simply select play or install to carry

out the appropriate action. To quit the menu and return to DOS, click on the C:\> icon in the bottom-right hand corner.

Note: We strongly recommend that you read the information on each of the games, as some have peculiarities. Also, if you install a product, check before hand that you have enough disk space. To remove a demo simply delete everything in the directory listed in the information below.

Also, remember that most games are supplied with read.me files, held in the relevant directories. You should look at these because they often give extra information on how to set-up and play each game

These documents can be viewed with any word processor.





FIRST DARK FORCES CHEAT!

Dark Forces is rumoured to contain several Doom-like cheat codes to give you extra health, weaponry, lives and so on.... and we've found the first of them! Type in LASKIP while you're playing and you can skip the level you're currently on. Obviously this isn't much use for the single level demo - although it will jump you to the end cut-sequence - however in the full game.....

Descent

(Interplay
01235 821666)

Doom in space-ships, flying around mines, with full 360 degrees movement - up, down, left, right, tilt. It's got it all. What's more up to

eight players can take part in a network game. It's brilliant. Watch out for a review of the new CD-ROM version in next month's issue.

To launch into space (well a mine shaft at least) select INSTALL from the DOSDEMOS directory, and choose the directory where you want the 7Mb of data to be copied to (NOTE: You need 15Mb free while the game is installing). After you've set your sound card, read the instructions (no, really). To run, change to the newly created directory and type DESCENT.



Alternative Dark Forces Demo

Just in case you've got a single-speed CD-ROM drive, or you prefer demos to run directly from hard disk, we've included the original demo - posted at Christmas to on-line services such as CompuServe. It actually includes more hidden weapons and opponents than the CD-ROM demo, although we haven't had space to include the cut-scenes.

To play this version - you'll need to install it manually. First, create a directory on your hard disk - say DF2. Now log onto the CD-ROM drive, and change directory to \GALLERY\ DARKBITS. Type PKUNZIP DFDEMO.ZIP C:\DF2 (or whatever you've called the directory) to unpack the files onto your hard disk (you'll need around 8Mb of space).

Now log onto the new directory, type Demo and select 1 (for install) to set-up the sound card options. From here, follow the on-screen instructions.

EXCLUSIVE!

Dark Forces Editor

To give you an even better idea of what the full game is like, we've included DFED 1.71. This is an exclusive Dark Forces Editor that allows you to randomise elements of the demo - including the power-ups and enemies. Best of all, if you look hard enough, you can find all ten weapons! Wow! However, before you use this editor, we suggest you thoroughly play the level as LucasArts intended.

DFed will only work with the alternative demo described above - not the full CD-ROM version. To install the editor, log onto the CD-ROM drive, and change directory to \GALLERY\ DARKBITS. Then type PKUNZIP DFED171.ZIP C:\DF2 (or whatever you've called the Dark Forces directory). Now log onto the new directory, and type DFED.

It's important to follow the next set of instructions carefully: Firstly, when asked, enter the name of the directory where the demo is installed - C:\DF2 for example. Now press 4. This backs-up the files that are about to be altered. (Selecting 5 at this point in the future restores the original files and it's recommended that you do this every time you use the program).

From now on you can experiment, although to start with, we suggest you perform simple changes. Try pressing 1 to add weapons and then selecting 19 to randomise the pick-ups in the level. Then press 2 to add enemies and select 16 to randomise these. Quit by pressing 6 and then run the game in the usual way. See any difference? You should!

If you try any of the other options, you may find that the game crashes when you start. To cure this, run DFED again and select 5 to restore the original files. You'll find that the program gives the impression that you can add some extra enemies from the full game - this isn't quite true as the relevant graphics are not included in the demo code. What this actually does is add the characteristics and AI of the heavy guys to the basic enemies.

For more information on DFED, view the README.DFE file which accompanies the program. Please note: DFED is not in any way endorsed by LucasArts, Virgin Interactive, Dennis Publishing or Jabba the Hutt. You use it at your own risk. By the way, you'll also find a FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) file in the \GALLERY\ DARKBITS directory, which is a fascinating read. Keep in mind though that it was written before the game was released.



More Playable PC demos

Wings of Glory

(Electronic Arts 01753

549442)

The latest flight-sim from the Origin stable set in World War I. For a full review see last issue.

Select INSTALL from the DOSDEMOS menu to copy the 10Mb of files to your hard disk in a \WGDEM0 directory. You will then enter a set-up menu, where you will be asked to set-up your sound card. To run the game, quit the DOSDEMOS program and type WG from the \WGDEM0 directory.



Mortal Kombat II

(Acclaim 0171 344 5000)

The game which caused an outrage when first released spawns a sequel, and it's just as good if not better. Turn to page 91 for a review of the game.

You can select RUN from the DOSDEMOS menu to play the game direct from the disc, but you won't hear any sound. A better option is to choose INSTALL – this copies 20Mb of data to a \MKII directory on your hard disk. To run the game, quit the DOSDEMOS program, change to the new directory and type MKII. In the game itself, pressing F1 brings up a main menu, where you can view and change the key settings.



Windows-based interactive demo

Xplora-1

(Mirage 01260 2999909)

The first big interactive music disc, featuring Peter Gabriel and his music, finally reaches the PC. Now you can see what all the fuss was about.

To install, choose RUN from the File menu of the Windows Program Manager, then type in x:\SETUP.EXE (where x is the letter of your CD-ROM drive). You'll now

get to choose where you wish to install the demo – it only copies 320k across.

An icon will be added to your desktop – simply double-click on this to start. To get going, move your mouse pointer to the bottom-left of the screen. From now on, you're on your own – as the name suggests, the idea is to explore.

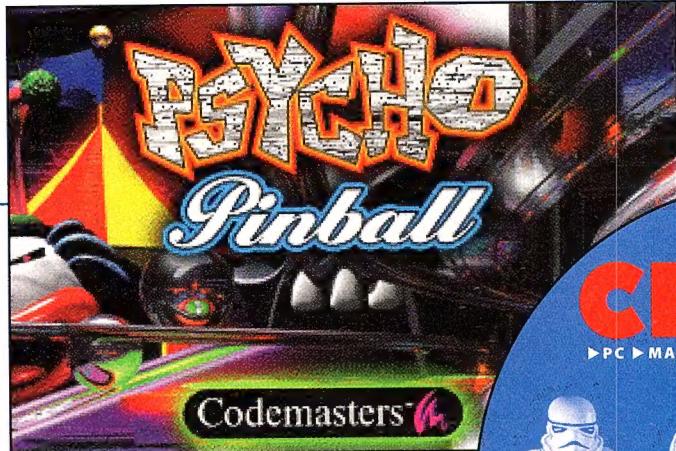
Premier Manager 3

(Gremlin 0114 275

3423)

The latest version of the popular football management game from those lovely Sheffield folk. Turn to page 93 for a review of the game.

Select INSTALL from the DOSDEMOS menu to invoke the set-up program. You will be asked to name a directory and 4.5Mb of files will be copied to your hard disk. You can now set-up your sound card. To play, quit the DOSDEMOS program and type PM3 from the newly created directory.



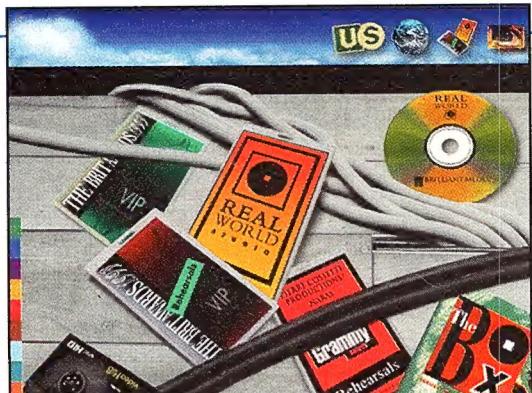
Psycho Pinball

(Codemasters 01926 814132)

The PC has graced some excellent pinball games in the past including the likes of Pinball Fantasies and Epic Pinball. Has Codemasters' entry in the field got what it takes to beat them? You decide.

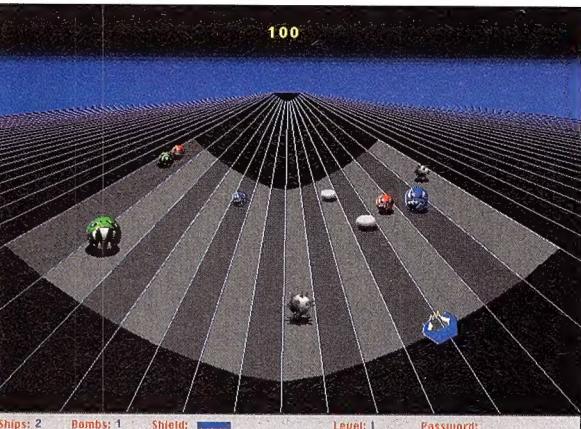
Psycho Pinball can be played direct from the disc – choose RUN from the DOSDEMOS program. You'll be presented with an information screen. Read this for details on which keys to use, then press a key to start. Note: this demo only offers SoundBlaster support – the full version is compatible with most other sound cards too.

Please note: This demo replaces Noctropolis which is mentioned on our cover disc label, but was found to be unstable when running from our cover CD-ROM.





Playable Mac demos



Mac Attack

Contact: GameTek
01753 553445

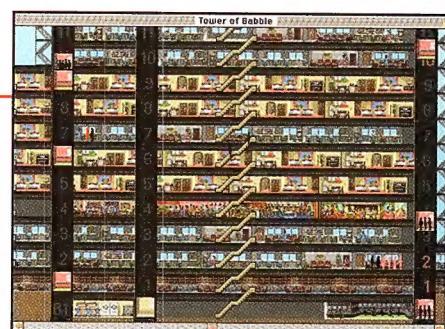
A brilliant update of the old Atari game Tempest, Mac Attack will have you glued to your screen for hours at a time. It's playable on just about any Mac under the sun (providing it has colour QuickDraw) and offers a

stunning mix of state of the art presentation (check out the About Mac Attack screen in the Apple Menu) and greased lightning gameplay. The controls are simple: the mouse moves your cannon while the button fires, the space bar activates your shield and pressing SHIFT delivers a serious smart bomb. Check out the read me first file for more details about configuring the game, double click the 'Mac Attack' icon and off you go. But be warned - your social life will be decimated...

Sim Tower

Contact Maxis Europe
(0171 490 2333)

Maxis are now one of the leading games developers for the Mac following the phenomenal success of last year's Sim City 2000. With Sim Tower, the company is once again giving Mac owners first bite at the cherry.



Sim Tower takes you right into the Sims' City but this time you're the owner and landlord of a single building. Your objective is to construct and develop a balanced and profitable commercial property by leasing space inside for apartments, offices, restaurants, and shops. Terrorists, fire, and even a visiting VIP pile on more fun as you build your way to a five-star, 99-storey, self-contained city in a skyscraper.

This interactive demo walks you through the basics of the game's control system and objectives. There are no read me files, simply double click on the 'Sim Tower Demo' icon to launch.

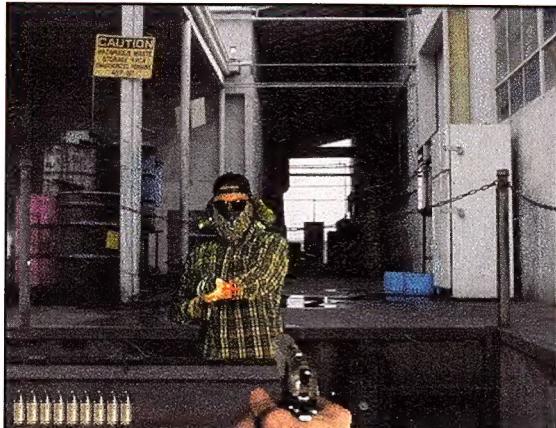
Blood Bath

Contact: UnderWorld:

email: UndrWrld@aol.com :
FAX: (310) 827-7079

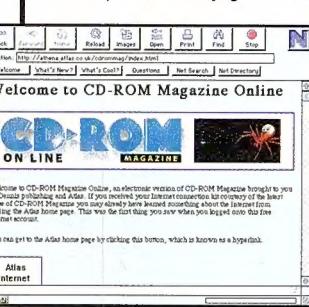
Requires: 2 Mogs of free RAM, 256 colours

This is a short but sweet showcase of the ground-breaking new technology behind Blood Bath, a new ultra-violence action game on Macintosh CD-ROM and floppy disk. The game features TruMotion, a groundbreaking new video compression technology which brings fast, full-motion, full-screen video to the Mac. To experience it for yourself just double click on the Blood Bath Trailer icon. But make sure you got a clean pair of boxer shorts handy...



FREE Internet

Every month CD-ROM Magazine offers free Internet access for both PC and Mac users. The software on our cover CD-ROM will take you directly to the home pages of our service provider Atlas Internet and, more importantly, to our very own Web site.



has installed a new server, but in order to dial on to it, existing users will need to tweak their dial-up settings.

To find out how to install the free software, and how to affect the changes, PC users should go to the *atlas* directory. Here you will find a *readme* file that explains both the installation procedure and the changes that need to be made to the settings.

Mac users should go to the *Atlas Internet Kit* folder, which also contains a setup *readme* file and all the software you will need to get up and running on the net.

We apologise for any inconvenience this enforced changeover has caused.

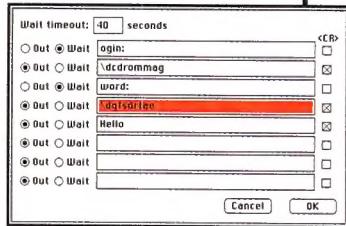
Each month we print a password that gives our readers another month's free Net time. This month we will be sticking with last month's password as compensation for

readers who had problems dialling in. To find out how to change the password next month, again go to the respective *readme* file.

The password, for both Mac and PC, is again

gtsdrtae

If you have any problems or enquiries Call Atlas on **0171 312 0401**



CD-ROM

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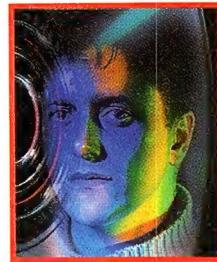
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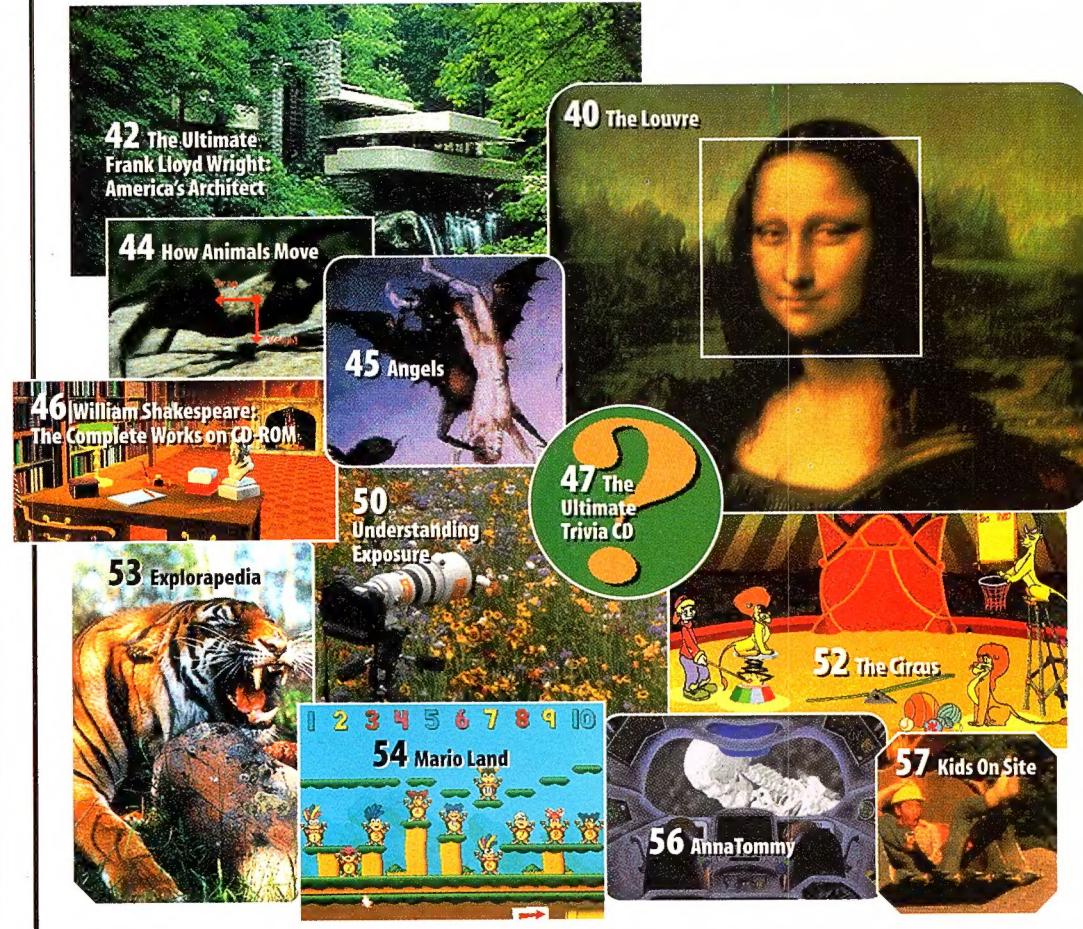
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Dennis

A Dennis Publication



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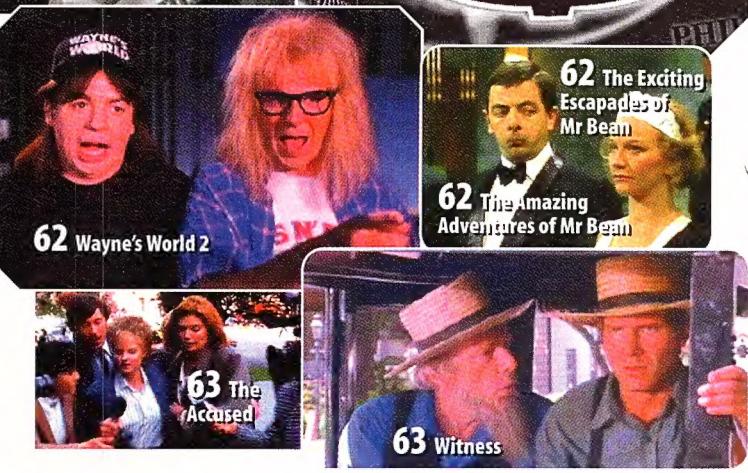
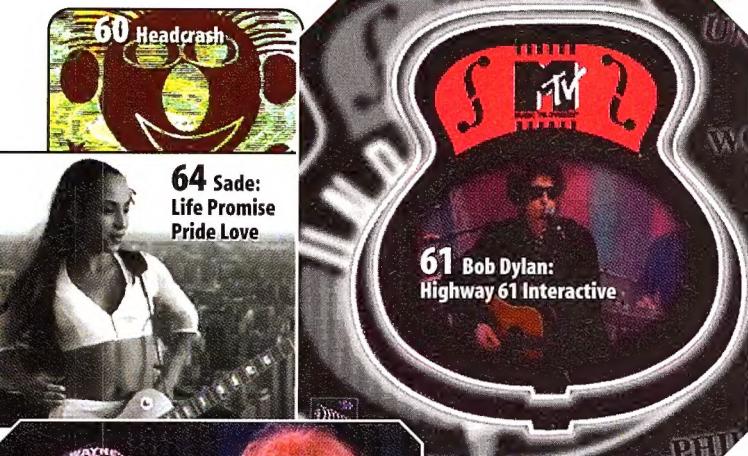


Call
MR COD

Too lazy to write?
Too busy to email?
Then why not call MR COD?
If you have anything to say about CD-ROM Magazine, call MR COD's ansaservice, on 0171 916 3596.

Selected calls will be digitised and published on next month's CD-ROM

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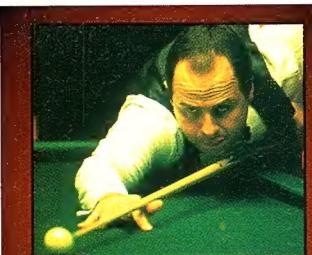




LETTERS

Feedback

CD-ROM Magazine
Dennis Publishing
19 Bolsover Street
London W1P 7HJ



This month's letters are again edited by Guy Sneeby. Since we can't possibly use the George Graham lookalike gag for a third month running, here's a picture of Tony Meo.

Net observations

I have recently been trying the Internet scene via a few free offers. Here are some observations.

Very few providers offer access at 28.8K, which makes Web viewing very slow especially on the interesting multimedia sites. I am used to connecting to BBS and OnLine services at this speed (57600 & 115200 software in some cases), so Internet seems very slow.

Regarding the Atlas offer, this seemed fine when I tried it out during the day. However, when I tried – at a more typical time for most people, the evening – I had almost no success with connecting.

Les Page
Essex

Not-so tempting offer

I was tempted to buy your magazine by the offer of Internet access. The software installed fine

but the phone number is permanently engaged. Well, I suppose you get what you pay for, which in this case is probably not your magazine again.

Adrian Skinner

Cheerful sort of bloke, aren't you, Ade.

We want a magic fix

Okay, it was a very brave try. It doesn't seem to have worked. As a user, I can tell you that the last thing I need to see is that I can't connect 'cos the lines are busy. Even letting me connect and telling me there's some other error is better than this. Still, maybe you'll have a magic fix next month.

Oh, the mag's alright. That might not sound like a ringing endorsement, but compared to the competition, I assure you, that's pretty good.

Best regards
Matthew Fosterjohn

Feeling a bit low, Matthew? Why not try e-mailing the Samaritans Internet service. You can reach them on miser@able.bug.ger.

A real reader writes

Many thanks for the software and introduction to the Internet in issue 7. I am now well and truly 'on-line' and loving every minute of it. I have completely lost track of how many e-mail messages I have sent to various people.

Atlas Internet is an excellent service provider, I have had no trouble getting connected, and the

feed

staff on the telephone have been incredibly helpful with all my technical queries.

Michael Kirk

at Vatican exhibits?
Terry (not an empty) Vassell
London E17

Another Hoover offer?

I attempted to send an e-mail to your e-mail address in the magazine. It was returned with the message no such user here!

It is impossible to use your free Internet offer. I have tried a lot, even after midnight, but with no success. Presumably you/Atlas underestimated demand. Is this going to be a Hoover flights offer of the computer world? (Where's that Watchdog e-mail address?)

Keep up the good work, on what is the best CD ROM mag out. Can you please e-mail me with your correct address. Oh, and it might be a good idea to publish it in your magazine.

Mike

Our service provider, Atlas Internet, reckons there is enough capacity on our free account for over 2,000 casual users with the existing number of lines. And we intend to at least double the number of lines over the next six months.

However it's time for a confession. It is my sad duty to inform you that on the evening of the 15th of February our internet server passed away.

Atlas has subsequently installed a new go-faster server, as well as a



A misleading ad?

I would like to draw your attention to the full page 'YOUR CHOICE' Adults Only advertisement in your February issue. I found it very misleading as I was moved to part with my £5 and I expected to receive a CD sampler disc with details of the company's rather dubious product range.

I think you would agree that £5 is a bit much for a 20-page paper catalogue! I guess it serves me right for sending off for such smut in the first place! However, I think you should ask the company concerned to make it clear that the £5 just buys a paper catalogue in the interest of your readers in future issues.

Yours faithfully, Rob Swinglehurst

*None of the editorial staff here spotted the ad, Rob. But thanks to you, other p*rs will be spared a similarly frustrating experience. P.S. The fiver's in the post.*

back

number of new lines. So the service should be even better, once all the glitches have been ironed out. The problem is that users need to reconfigure their access software to dial in to the new server, and of course we couldn't inform you all personally because we don't know who you are! This is the main reason many of the lines have appeared to be busied out over the past few weeks.

We have included a *readme* file on the current cover CD-ROM explaining how to reconfigure the software. We are also working on a new installer that carries out the reconfiguration automatically which you should (hopefully) be able to find at the root of the current cover disc. Our apologies for any lost sleep we have caused.

Walkthrough check-out

I am a first time buyer of *CD-ROM Magazine* and I like what I see. I would, however, like to see even more. For example, a quick description of how to access your chosen application on the Internet. This seems to be an exciting and new method of communicating but I find it awfully confusing.

As you are offering, with *Atlas*, to extend the free practice on the Internet every month, I would be grateful if you could devote a

column in the next few months to describing the things that I can interact with in some way.

Dave Porter via fax

Your wish is our command, Dave. Check out our groovy Internet walkthrough pages in the Workshop section.

Threadbare carpet

 As a subscriber since your initial issue, it is good to see a magazine steadily improving both in quality and content.

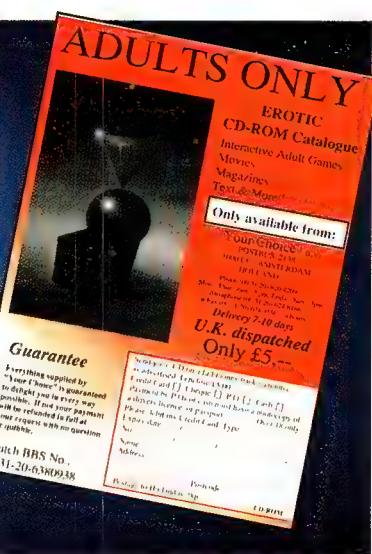
However, your rave review of *Magic Carpet* surprised me. I bought it after your glowing review and was bitterly disappointed to discover it is basically a rather childish shoot-'em-up arcade game which has been tarted up with various extremely clever gimmicks. It doesn't begin to compare with a superbly designed, imaginative conception like *Myst*.

How can you call *Magic Carpet* "the most beautiful game ever" when the graphics (on a 16Mb Pentium machine) are grainy and unconvincing. Even the 'glorious' animation at the completion of each level bears no comparison with a single frame from *Myst*, judged artistically or technically. *Myst* has affected every person I know who has played it - drawing them closely into the action. There is absolutely no danger of this happening with *Magic Carpet*.

If only some genius could combine the cerebral brilliance of *Myst* with the free movement facility of *Magic Carpet*, we might have the best game in the world!

Mr Vivian (Get a) Liff
via Fax
Isle of Man

We agree that *Myst* is probably the best adventure game on any platform. We did, after all, award it the CD-ROM Magazine adventure game of the year. But for sheer overall magnificence, *Magic Carpet* takes some beating.



Mega

A tiny bit sad



I am an avid reader of *CD-ROM Magazine*, ever since I casually picked up your first edition in the clinic waiting room. Some may describe me as "a tiny bit sad", but I really do read it from cover to cover. It's simply excellent!

Jon Lavelle, Cheshire Via fax

You are a tiny bit sad, Jon. But we love you, and so does everyone at the clinic.

Mr Lee is alive!



Ghosts? (Vol 1. No. 7) Why Mr Christopher Lee is the living proof of their existence. According to Microsoft he died in 1993, or at least that is what they state in *Cinemania 94*.

Am I glad to hear that you are finally changing the CD interface. Like in most multimedia, what might have been fun the first time, simply became a terrible waste of everybody's time.

Bertil Holmberg
Malmö, Sweden

A tip from a Trekkie



Last week I received (and installed) the Star Trek Interactive Technical Manual CD-ROM (I did not know it existed until I read about it in your mag).

It features the new QuickTime VR, and not only is this an excellent CD-ROM, it also runs your cover disc more smoothly. My computer is only a 486SX-25, but it runs the cover


E-Mail
 Applelink: cdrom.mag
 CompuServe: 100034,1055
 Internet: feedback@atlas.co.uk
 Fax: 0171 917 7680

disc like it is a DX2-66!

Best regards,
Ewout de Graaf

Nice tip, Ewout.

Readers' wives

 In the CD sleeve for Disc 5, Feb 95 a photograph of myself and my wife is printed (feedback page, second row, second from left). Did this picture actually appear on a CD, as I missed a couple of the previous ones? If it did can I get a copy from anywhere?

The Internet free access is really useful, except I have now had to order a faster modem, 2400 is fine for CompuServe mail, but tedious (and expensive) for Web.html pages.

Anon

Check out our back issues service on page 71. Or to contact other readers' wives... Only joking.

Where's my prize?

 Where's my prize for the CD-ROM Hell competition?

You included my picture and text on the CD and you write (page 10 Vol. 1 No. 6) that... "Prizes will be sent to all those who entered."

So where's my prize?
Great mag apart from the prize-giving ceremonies!!

Bo (Mr. Miserable who never wins anything!) Bassman



I thought I told you to wait in the car.

ONE SIZE.



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Diamond Multimedia's Kits are the family's favourite, with something exciting for everybody. Whether it's entertainment or education, Diamond Multimedia leads the industry with a hardware and software bundle that's hard to beat.

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Interactive Encyclopedia, *Sim City 2000* and much more, Diamond Multimedia leads the industry. Equipped with either the new lightning fast quad speed CD-ROM drive or the blisteringly quick double speed CD-ROM drive, these kits are brought to you by the industry leader renown for their Viper and Stealth line up.

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DIAMOND
MULTIMEDIA
Formerly Diamond Computer Systems, Inc.



BROWSER

Virtual Light!

WILLIAM GIBSON'S vision of virtual reality has come one step closer with the release of Video i-O i-glasses, a pair of virtual shades that weigh less than 100g.

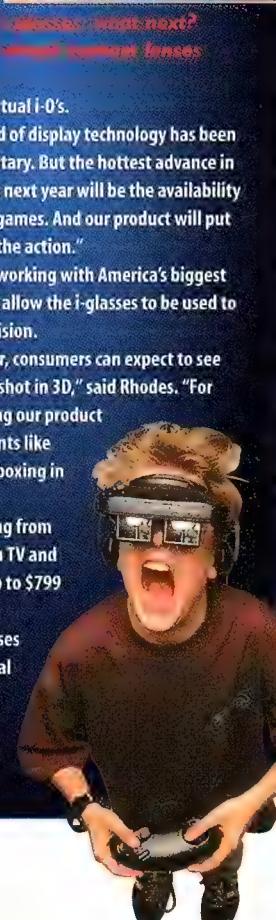
"The i-glasses create the impression of a large virtual screen floating in mid-air. This is a very dramatic viewing experience that, until now, hadn't been available to everyday consumers," said Linden Roads, the senior vice president of i-glasses developer Virtual i-O's.

"In the past, this kind of display technology has been limited to use by the military. But the hottest advance in virtual reality during the next year will be the availability of 3D and virtual reality games. And our product will put gamers in the middle of the action."

The company is also working with America's biggest cable TV operator, TCI, to allow the i-glasses to be used to view virtual reality television.

"During the next year, consumers can expect to see television programming shot in 3D," said Rhodes. "For example, sports fans using our product will be able to watch events like basketball, football and boxing in a super-realistic way."

i-glasses cost anything from \$599, for a base unit with TV and video capabilities only, up to \$799 for full headtracking VR. Unfortunately, the i-glasses are likely to remain virtual in the UK for six months at least, as Virtual i-O has been inundated by demand in the US.



In the digital soup: Apple wages QuickTime war with Microsoft, MPEG cards on the rack, GEX goes cold on 3DO, world's first six-speed CD-ROM drive, Sony and Toshiba still warring over digital video

Apple in QuickTime war with Microsoft

A HUGE row has blown up between Apple, Intel and Microsoft which could affect Microsoft's future multimedia strategy. The furore began back in December, when Apple initiated a law suit against one of its small subcontractors, The San Francisco Canyon Company. This alleged that Canyon had sold copyright Apple code to Intel, and that the code had subsequently been incorporated into Microsoft's Video for Windows.

The action centres on code allegedly misappropriated from the Windows version of Apple's video playback software QuickTime. Canyon developed QuickTime for Windows under contract, and later produced code for Intel's Video Display Interface, a precursor to the Intel-Microsoft Display Control Interface (DCI).

Apple alleges that both DCI and Microsoft's Video for Windows 1.1D contain code identical to that in QuickTime for Windows. The code in question bypasses Windows' Graphics Display Interface and enables an application program to write directly to the PC's video card as an add-on peripheral, enabling smooth 'movie' playback.

Neither Intel nor Microsoft has denied the use of the code. Intel refers to it as "a relatively small, minor piece of code", while Microsoft is writing off

DEPARTMENTS | PRODUCTS

- APPLE MERCHANDISE
- NEWTON
- PERFORMA
- POWERBOOK
- POWER MACINTOSH
- SOFTWARE

click to go to a department

HOME | HELP




The Company Store

Microsoft has raided the company software store, says Apple

the disputed software as "low-level driver code."

Setting aside the apparent hypocrisy of Microsoft trivialising software piracy, Apple in any case, alleges that the unlicensed use runs to "several thousand lines of code."

Microsoft's second line of defence is that it used the code supplied by Intel in good faith, assuming that the rights to it were not in question. Apple retorts that "we think that Intel and Microsoft knew, or should have known, that they were getting pirated code."

In an interesting side development, Microsoft is currently porting Video for Windows over (or back) to the Macintosh, in an effort to compete against QuickTime for the affections of developers of cross-platform multimedia CD-ROMs.

This one looks set to run and run.





Major developer goes cold on 3DO as unit sales falter

CRYSTAL DYNAMICS, one of the two major developers for 3DO alongside Electronic Art, may be set to pull out of development for the platform, according to Rob Dyer, vice-president of International Operation.

"The next few months are critical for 3DO. Panasonic and The 3DO Company need to be really serious about what's going on in Europe. They only had 15,000 machines in the UK [at Christmas] and that's not good," he told *CD-ROM Magazine*.

"We've had great games on the 3DO with good reviews, so has EA. But how many can you expect to sell? A top 3DO game in the UK is selling 6,000 units. It's hard – you work your butt off, the games get good reviews, but who's buying it? Our programmers and producers are frustrated."

Dyer claims that 500,000 3DO machines have been manufactured and sold into the channels, but the actual installed user base at Christmas was closer to between 300,000 and 350,000 worldwide.



Slam 'n' Jam: Crystal Dynamix lines up to slam dunk 3DO

The company's 3DO line-up for coming months features the long-awaited platform game GEX (now due in April), a basketball game called *Slam'n'Jam* (May), Ballz (June) – a conversion of the innovative Sega Megadrive beat-'em-up – and a baseball game (late summer).

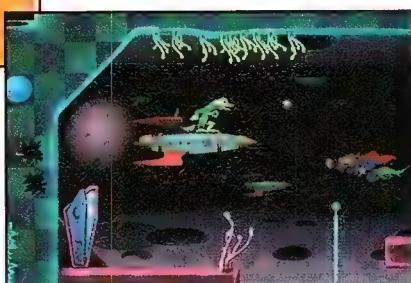
However, no 3DO titles are currently scheduled to follow.

Like many other 3DO developers, Crystal Dynamics' marketing strategy has also been affected by the \$6 'tax' imposed on all 3DO software (see news,

December 1994). Dyer said that Crystal Dynamics has always intended to support the Sony PlayStation and Sega Saturn, but after strong sales in Japan over Christmas emphasis on these machines is now much heavier.

BMG Interactive, the sole distributor for Crystal Dynamics in the UK, has secured the rights to distribute VR Stalker – the 3DO's first flight sim, from American Laser Games – and Jammit! – a 'street' basketball title from GTE Interactive. Both are expected to hit UK stores this month.

BMG Interactive 0171 973 0011



GEX takes a sideways leap onto PlayStation



Plexor hits drives for six

PLEXOR HAS rolled out the world's first six-speed CD-ROM drive, a 900Kb/sec monster called the 6Plex. The drive represents a threefold improvement in data transfer rate over standard double-speed machines, with access times – at a nippy 145ms – also more than twice as fast as the common or garden double speed.

For straightforward data transfer, and interrogating CD-based databases, the 6Plex is said to be streets ahead of conventional drives. And the company is also claiming dramatic improvements in the playback of CD-based video and multimedia.

The drives are being shown for the first time at CeBit, in Hanover this month, and are expected to be launched in the UK on April 1, at a street price of around £410. Watch out for a review as soon as we get our sweaty little palms on one.

Macs join JFK conspiracy

MACINTOSH users finally get the chance to join the conspiracy theorists and re-live one of the most shocking events of the 20th Century with the release of *JFK Assassination: A Visual Investigation* onto Mac CD-ROM.

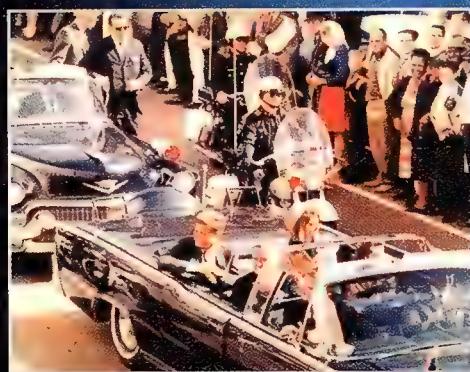
The PC-CD version, released back in 1993, was a major hit with both the press and the public – our reviewer described it as "multimedia at its most compelling" back in issue one.

Developed by Medio Multimedia, the CD-ROM enables you to recreate and analyse the events of November 22, 1963 in a wide variety of ways. Silicon Graphics-rendered simulations of the bullets' trajectory and impacts are backed up with actual movie footage of events as they happened – including the infamous *Zapruder* tape in its entirety.

Also on the CD-ROM are several hundred photos, a hypertext fact book and the complete text of the Warren Commission report.

The Mac version has been updated and improved with the addition of full-screen QuickTime 2.0 video sequences and a more user-friendly interface.

"In developing our first interactive multimedia title for this platform, we've taken the original content and optimised it to take full advantage of the Macintosh," said Medio's vice-president of Product Development, Scott Pehrson."



You get a much better view, with QuickTime 2.



Everything you need to get your home movies running as full screen MPEG files, says Sigma

Sigma launches £3,000 MPEG 'breakthrough'

SIGMA DESIGNS, maker of the RealMagic MPEG decoder cards, is set to make a big splash in the MPEG encoding market by launching a 'desktop' professional authoring system for under £3,000.

The RealMagic Producer undercuts existing real-time MPEG authoring tools by over £6,000. The company claims that the move will help create "an explosion" in the number of VideoCD and interactive MPEG titles, and in turn increase demand for its range of decoder cards.

The system is also claimed to be the first to support AVI Editable MPEG – a file format created by Microsoft and Sigma Designs that enables MPEG frames to be manipulated with any AVI-compatible video editing tool.

"RealMagic Producer demonstrates a major breakthrough in video editing on the PC," said Sigma Designs' co-chairman Julien Nguyen. "Now any multimedia author can create professional-looking applications incorporating the video realism that only MPEG delivers."

The total package will sell for £3,466 including VAT, and features a 32-bit PCI controller card/MPEG encoder, a frame-accurate video tape recorder (VTR) controller, Adobe Premiere 4.0 and Caligari trueSpace 3D graphics and animation software. It requires a Pentium PC equipped with a 32-bit PCI bus slot and a RealMagic playback board.

Apple sees red on 'gay cowboy' CD



APPLE COMPUTER has been accused of censoring an educational CD-ROM covering US history because it mentions homosexuality, birth control and abortion.

The disc – Who Built America? – an interactive history of the US between the years 1876 and 1914, was being distributed by Apple to schools and colleges as part of an educational bundle. But following a number of complaints from schools, Apple has decided to strike the disc from its collection.

The offending material? How about the suggestions that not all cowboys were red-blooded, red-necked heterosexuals? A topic labelled 'Male-Male

Intimacy in the West' features a photo of two nude cowboys sitting together in a lake captioned: "Some men were drawn to the frontier because of their attraction to men."

But the disc is far from being a sensationalist piece of muckraking. It was produced by the respected CD-ROM developer Voyager in association with the American Social History Project, an organisation that develops history resources for high schools and colleges.

Voyager claims that Apple asked it to remove all references to birth control, abortion and homosexuality in the title. When Voyager refused, Apple pulled the plug on the bundle deal, claims marketing director Susan Griffin. Apple has refused to comment on the 'affair' other than to confirm that it had received customer complaints about the Who Built America? CD-ROM.



CHARTS

CD-i Top Ten

1. Burn:Cycle
2. Striker Pro
3. Lemmings
4. Mad Dog McCree
5. Alien Gate
6. Caesar's World Of Gambling
7. Earth Command
8. The Apprentice
9. Surf City
10. Voyeur

PC CD-ROM Top Ten

1. Microcosm
2. Reunion
3. Wing Commander III
4. Innocent Until Caught
5. Creature Shock
6. Doom 2
7. Magic Carpet
8. Alone In The Dark 3
9. Premier Manager 3
10. X-Wing

Mac CD-ROM Top Ten

1. Myst
2. Rebel Assault
3. Little Monster at School
4. The 7th Guest
5. Return To Zork
6. Harry and the Haunted House
7. The Mask – The Origin
8. 1995 Guinness Disc of Records
9. The Joy of Sex
10. The Journeyman Project Turbo

CHARTS COMPILED BY GALLUP

CHARTS COMPILED BY SOFTLINE

Died and gone to cockpit heaven?

AT AROUND 300 lb dead weight, the Flight Sim Cockpit from Thrustmaster is something of a gamesplayer's dream.

A cross between a Space Shuttle escape pod and a tin bath, the cockpit consists of a fibreglass housing, foam and faux leather seat cushions, back cushion and built-in headrest, and a practically endless series of add-ins including a \$149 ladder to help you climb into the thing.

The unit parks in front of your PC, allowing users to control their simulation game from a standard keyboard,

from a built-in switch kit and controller that activates an additional 64 functions from the cockpit panels, or from any number of add-in Thrustmaster controls.

But at over \$3,000 the fully spammed-up monty, is not expected to sell particularly well to UK gamers.

"The majority of enquiries have so far come from government organisations looking for a cheap way of building their own flight simulator," according to the company's spokesman Paul Crisp.



The Thrustmaster Flight Sim Cockpit: I'll take it, in avocado



Your starter for ten: which red brick university has a hall of residence 10 yards from a pub

CD-ROM tackles University challenge

EVERY YEAR, about this time, 17-year-old students turn themselves over to the vagaries of the University clearing system.

A few months later, they receive a bewildering raft of glossy prospectuses, selling the benefits of glamorous-sounding former polytechnics in the rosiest possible terms. Now, thanks to the first ever prospectus on CD-ROM, all that looks set to change.

Students can now get a more realistic handle on the realities of student life, courtesy of Hobsons Publishing, supplier of printed careers and education material for years, and now the proud developer of a two-disc CD-ROM guide to over 150 universities and colleges.

Called Which University on CD-ROM, the guide is designed to help students decide which institution best suits their needs with advice about accommodation, fees and student life.

In the first issue of the disc, the developer admits there is a fairly limited amount of multimedia. Indeed, for most entries the data is entirely in written form.

Nevertheless, leading red brick institutions, such as Bristol and Hull Universities, do offer multimedia prospectuses including video and audio sequences on the discs. And the developer plans a further disc in the autumn with greatly increased multimedia content.

Which University costs £68.15 (inc VAT) before 31 July 1995, and £111.63 thereafter.

Contact: Biblio 01403 710971

EMI recalls 'badly encoded' VideoCDs

EMI HAS decided to offer punters who bought its first batch of VideoCD music titles a free upgrade to the new, re-encoded versions released this month.

The five titles – from Queen, Pink Floyd, Tina Turner, David Bowie and Kate Bush – have been re-released only six months after the originals.

The move follows criticism from the public and press concerning the encoding products, which were blighted by visible artefacts and technical problems. PMI – EMI's video subsidiary – has kept a database of complaints and has already sent the new discs out to those who returned the originals demanding refunds.

"We had quite a few [returns]," admits a PMI spokesperson. "I wouldn't like to say how many. But they've all been sent the new discs."

The latest discs – distinguished by a 'Re-mastered edition 1.2' sticker – have had a number of improvements beyond the basic MPEG-1 encoding. These include:

- smooth fades between tracks rather than abrupt jumps;
- a Windows application delivering a CD-i-style interface when played on an MPEG-compatible PC;
- a redesigned video control bar with improved fast forward,



The infamous five: triumphantly re-encoded with added sticker

rewind and slow-motion capabilities;

- the option to manually centre the on-screen video image.

Both the discs' encoders OmniMedia and PMI are trying to portray the whole affair as a positive step forward rather than a desperate attempt to compensate for initial blunders.

"Version 1.2 marks an historic moment in the development of VideoCD," proclaimed Martin Wyn Griffith, PMI's marketing director. "Yet again EMI leads the way."

PMI VideoCD Helpline 01494 471150



ROM service: hotels go hi-tech

Regent Hotel perk in the park

LONDON'S NEWEST five-star hotel, The Regent, has developed a CD-ROM guide to sell the benefits of its services.

"CD-ROM is becoming the universal source of reference, entertainment and educational information," said general manager Wolfgang Nitschke.

The Regent Hotel CD-ROM offers users an interactive tour of the hotel's facilities, including detailed information about banqueting rooms, as well as general facts, videos and diagrams about the hotel. The disc also includes The British Authority's Welcome to London package as an added incentive to overseas visitors.

Regent Hotel 0171 631 8000

Sony plans to charge up OnLine Web site

ELECTRONICS GIANT Sony is going to transform its current World Wide Web site – Sony OnLine – into a full commercial service this September.

OnLine is free to anyone with a Web browser and Net access, but Sony plans to enhance this with "customised programming".

The new service is set to build on the existing Sony OnLine site – which incorporates information, photos, videos, sound clips and demos from various Sony operations, including Sony Pictures, Sony Music and Sony Electronic Publishing. One of the new services, Sony Signatures, will enable users to access and order from a catalogue of corporate merchandise.

The move could start a trend as companies move from using the

Internet as a purely promotional tool to cash cow by charging for on-line access. However, Sony says it has no plans yet to charge users – possibly because of the current difficulties in introducing on-



Sony OnLine

But how much, and who will deliver?

line charges onto the Web.

Sony is seeking a commercial on-line company to deliver Sony OnLine. Contenders include America On-Line, CompuServe, eElphi and the yet to be launched Microsoft Network.

Contact Sony OnLine
<http://www.sony.com>

FROM THE PUBLISHERS OF THE HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL TIE FIGHTER™ AND X-WING™
COMES A NEW DIMENSION IN STAR WARS® ENTERTAINMENT

STAR WARS DARK FORCES

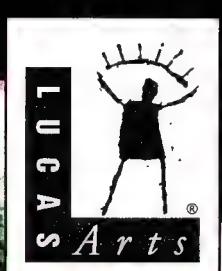
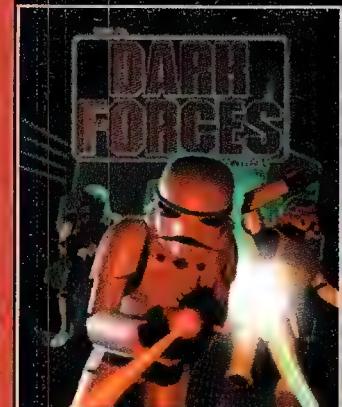
CAN YOU SMELL THE
FOUL STENCH
OF EVIL?

CAN YOU LOOK DEATH AND
DISTRESS IN THE FACE?
ARE YOU READY TO FACE

THE DARK SIDE?

FIRST
PERSON
FIRE
POWER
IN THE
STAR WARS
UNIVERSE

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Datablast:

NEW PARTNERS FOR 3DO?

The 3DO Company claims to have rounded up a new batch of investment partners to back the company – but has refused to name them.

Chief executive Trip Hawkins has denied that the company is about to run out of money, saying that it had \$19 million in the bank at the end of 1994. If 3DO did need more money, Hawkins said he could provide it from his own wallet or from the new, unnamed partners.

STOCKBROKERS NET UP

A Cambridge-based start-up company plans to launch the UK's first on-line share dealing service on the Internet later this year.

Electronic Share Information is currently seeking a licence from Britain's stock regulator, the Securities and Investments Board. It intends to invite other small start-ups to list their shares on its electronic bulletin board so individual investors can buy and sell from their home PCs.

HOLOGRAMS STAMP ON CD-ROM PIRACY SCAM

A new system which imprints hologram-like images onto the shiny surface of compact discs is the latest salvo in the war against software piracy.

Disc Manufacturing, the largest independent CD-ROM maker in the US, claims its ImageDisc technology makes CDs and CD-ROMs much harder to counterfeit, and will also make them more attractive.

The International Federation of the Phonographic Industry estimates that worldwide piracy of music CDs doubled in 1993 to about 75 million discs, worth over £500 million.

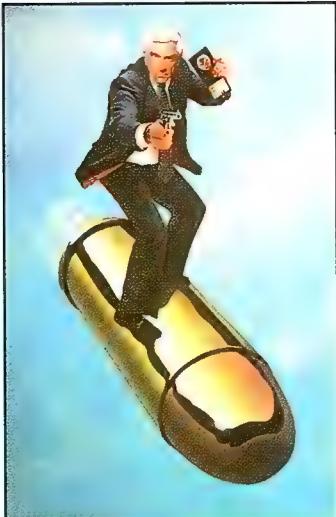
PHILIPS LOOKS FOR MULTIMEDIA MATES

Dutch electronics giant Philips has denied rumours that it is planning to bid for Apple Computer but has said it is looking to forge "multimedia alliances".

The news came as the company unveiled sharply increased 1994 results which saw profits surge to 2.05 billion guilders (£805 million) from a previous 856 million guilders (£337 million).

"Multimedia has very high costs so it's only normal that players look for co-operation," said Chairman Jan Timmer.

Sony blasts hopes of digital video CD truce



Sony refuses to bite the bullet over anticipated digital video war

SONY HAS smashed hopes of truce in the escalating format war between two new high density, digital video disc systems.

The battle is between Sony and Philips on one side and a consortium led by Toshiba, Matsushita and Panasonic on the other. Both camps claim that their standards – which can store up to 10 gigabytes of data on a single disc – herald the future for both high quality digital movies and data storage (see Browser last issue).

It was rumoured that Sony and Philips were close to agreeing a compromise to avoid a damaging VHS/Betamax-style format war. But the stories have been scotched by Sony's managing director Nobuyuki Idei.

"Sony will not join the (rival) SD format nor join in discussions aimed at compromising its format," he said bluntly.

Apparently Sony and Philips engineers have examined the Toshiba SD system and decided that it had distinct disadvantages. "Nobody likes the way they are proposing to stick two separate discs together to make a double sided CD-ROM," said a Philips source. "It's a fudge that will cost a lot to manufacture." He claims that Toshiba discs will be at least 30% more expensive to make.

The Sony/Philips approach is to put two layers of information on a single side of a disc and refocus the laser so it can read both. The system will store 7.4Gb of data compared with Toshiba's 10Gb.

The challenge for Sony and Philips is to persuade other hardware and software companies to back its proposals. But in opting to fight, the companies risk blighting the prospects of either format succeeding.

It don't mean a thing if it ain't got that MPEG Xing

THE MARKET for PC MPEG playback cards could be set to nosedive before it properly gets off the ground, thanks to a new software decoder from Xing Technology.

One of the pioneers of MPEG systems, Xing Technology is getting into bed with graphics and video capture card manufacturers in a bid to bring out software MPEG decoders that will play back MPEG video full-screen at 25 frames per second (fps).

Xing is making a clutch of new products – XingMPEG Encoder and XingMPEG Player CD – available to third-party manufacturers such as VideoLogic, Miro and Cirrus to bundle with their products.

On a fast, video-accelerated Pentium

PC, Xing software will enable users to capture and play back full-screen, 30fps video without a dedicated MPEG board such as Sigma Design's RealMagic. By the middle of 1995, the company anticipates the same level of performance on "low-end" Pentiums.

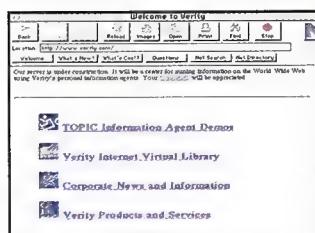
"Xing software has already reached the performance of dedicated MPEG hardware," said Chris Eddy, Xing's software development director. "Software is unequivocally the future for MPEG."

In the short term, Xing is also looking to bundle its encoding software with MPEG decoder cards to offer users the opportunity to convert existing AVI files to the MPEG format.

In an open invitation to companies, Xing's product manager Sean O'Toole said: "The compression debate has recently shifted from 'which standard?' to 'which MPEG?' We now have the most cost-effective, high-performance software available. Anyone who wants a complete, integrated MPEG software solution should look no further than Xing."



Software is the future for MPEG.



Smart agents scour the Net

Verity unleashes Internet agents

TEXT RETRIEVAL expert Verity has unveiled the world's first ever World Wide Web server to include 'intelligent agents', pieces of smart software that go out onto the Net to track down 'user-customised' information.

The company's TOPIC Information Server for the World Wide Web is a commercial Internet publishing kit, that will help developers build their own intelligent Internet sites.

The publishing kit will include all the components necessary to ensure bullet-proof authentication procedures, cross-platform document exchange formats which can be automatically output as Web pages, and Adobe Acrobat support, according to a company spokesman.

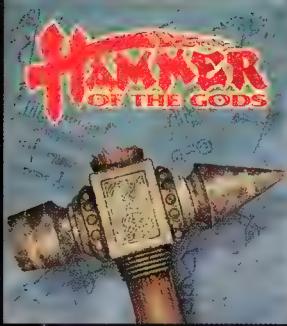
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SOFTWARE PREVIEWS



This month Gallery serves up a raft of top-notch games, a 'Director's Kit' for pre-pubescent Spielbergs and some honey roast ham acting from Tim Curry...

Nickelodeon Director's Lab

Release date: April (PC)/June (Mac)

Format: PC CD/Mac CD

Developer: Viacom New Media

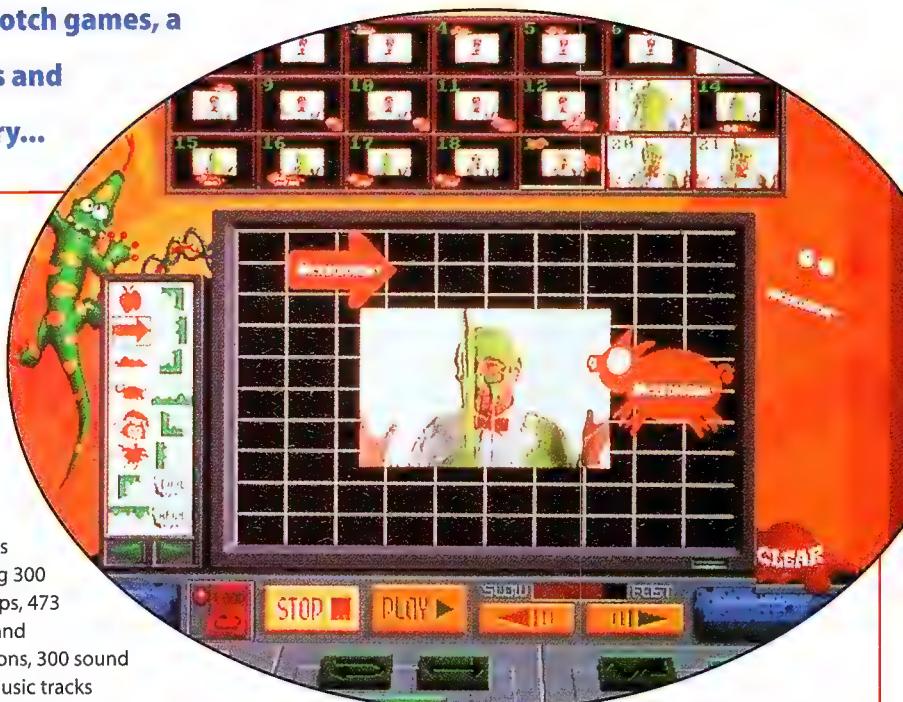
Contact: CIC Interactive (0181 563 4013)

Described by its distributors as a "full service video production studio for kids", Nickelodeon Director's Lab is certainly aiming to exploit a new niche in the multimedia market.

The CD-ROM allows children – and parents, no doubt – to create their own jazzy videos from a vast set of built-in resources

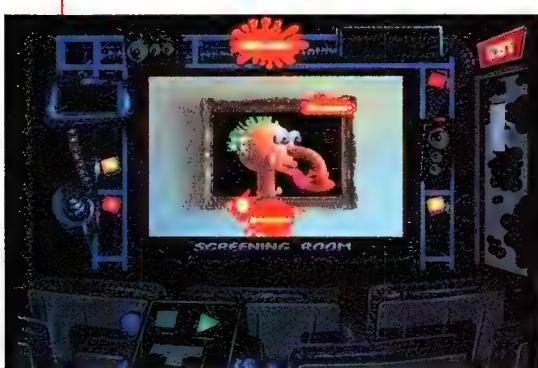
including 300 video clips, 473 photos and illustrations, 300 sound f/x, 70 music tracks and 125 different graphics templates.

The various effects and assets can be manipulated in the interface's five 'studios', which also allow the 'director' to incorporate captions



and their own recorded voice-overs to the on-screen mix. If all this seems a little intimidating for little Johnny or Jenny, there's an on-line help function presented by Melissa Joan Hart, currently appearing on BBC's *Live and Kicking* TV show.

All in all, this is a very impressive looking package stuffed with state-of-the-art technology. Perhaps its biggest drawback is the inability to import and manipulate your own home videos, but no doubt that will come in Director's Lab version 1.1.



The Orion Conspiracy

Release date: March

Format: MPC

Developer: Divide by Zero

Contact: Domark (0181 780 2224)

The Orion Conspiracy is one of those huge, epic adventure things that turn up from time to time boasting all kinds of special features and gizmos. Designed by London-based team Divide by Zero, the story is set on Cerberus, a distant galactic research centre. Situated near a Black Hole, you find yourself far from home and grieving for your dead son, Danny.

Visiting Cerberus to attend his memorial service you feel suspicious

about your son's old work chums. They're all acting a little oddly and are extremely secretive about their work. While relaxing in your quarters, someone slips a note under the door stating that Danny's death was not an accident but murder. The ensuing adventure involves you playing the role of intergalactic detective as you try to find out the truth.

This is one of the most impressive-looking products from Domark in quite some time. It has been specifically designed for CD and features an excellent intelligent point-and-click interface and full speech throughout. It also boasts hand-painted backdrops, rendered movie sequences and full SVGA images throughout. In all, then an extremely smart-looking game.





Terra-Nova: Strike Force Centauri

Release date: May

Format: MPC

Developer: Looking Glass

Contact: Virgin Interactive Entertainment (0181 960 2255)

A great deal has been made of Looking Glass Technology's superb 'immersive reality' graphics engine which has been showcased so effectively on the team's highly acclaimed Flight Unlimited (see review page 84). Not wishing to

waste such a pioneering achievement, the team is now beavering away at a futuristic, hi-tech 3D combat game set in the Alpha Centauri system.

The basic idea behind the game is that you are the commander of the usual sort of 'elite band of warriors'. You're the big bad boss and all of your

crack troops are harder than a particularly hard bag of nails. Your task as commander is to wage war against some sinister forces known as the Earth Hegemony who have a number of operations stretching throughout the Alpha Centauri system.



What makes Terra-Nova unique is that it interweaves the 'TerraScaping' graphics system used in Flight Unlimited, high quality CinePak quality video footage and some rather clever real-time physics algorithms that make everything feel 'real'. The team is also rather proud of its advanced artificial intelligence engine, used to make all of the forces roaming around the game behave far more realistically than

simple computer controlled-troops.

When complete, Terra-Nova will be designed to work in both VGA and SVGA graphics modes and it will support all major virtual reality standards (including VFX and CyberMaxx). How absolutely topper.

Virtual Chess

Release date: April

Format: MPC

Developer: Titus

Contact: Titus (0171 700 2119)

Although relatively quiet on the release front recently, Titus has been busy

working on a host of PC CD-ROM titles for the coming year. The first fruits of this intensive development program (due to be launched under the new label Versus) is an advanced chess game which we are assured is more intelligent than any other. Yes, yes, every chess game ever released always claims to be able to out-think Kasparov with one arm tied behind its back, but apparently this one can. The French team responsible for the game are convinced that it is more intelligent than any other game on the market including Kasparov's Gambit and ChessMaster 4000.

What makes Virtual Chess unique though – and also explains the ridiculous association of the words 'virtual' and 'chess' – is the fact that it uses a superb 3D graphics engine that lets you move and rotate a polygon-based chess board into pretty much any position you want. Aside from this though, the game also employs a windowing system which allows you to have a simultaneous update of a 2D board, 3D board, move table, clock and various other bits of information.

Another rather original feature (what another one?) is the fact that you can also play a game across an IPX network. To our knowledge there isn't any other chess game available which offers a two-player game of this style.

Aside from the clever game, Virtual Chess is on CD because it features a number of Silicon Graphics-rendered animations with various melting chess pieces and exploding pawns and so on. Nothing particularly useful... but hey, it looks nice!



Frankenstein: Through the Eyes of the Monster

Release date: April

Format: MPC, Mac

Developer: Interplay

Contact: Interplay (01235 821666)

Tim Curry has been popping up all over the place in this 'interactive movie' malarkey... and here he is again as the sinister Dr Frankenstein.

Although sharing a lot of elements with games such as The 7th Guest and even Myst in places, the game is conceptually quite original. Rather than simply mooching around in typical adventure game style you

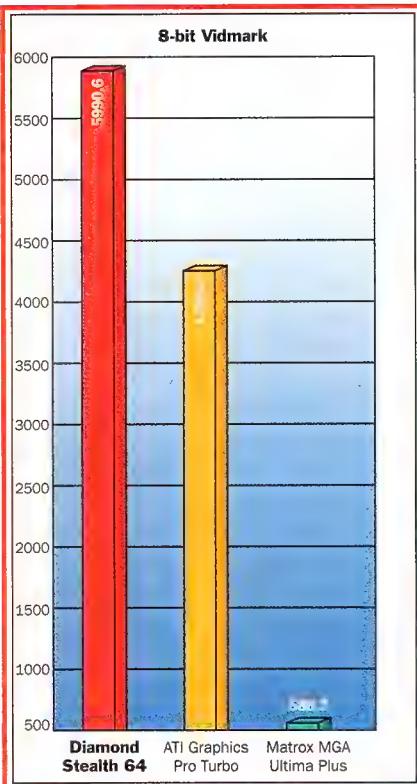
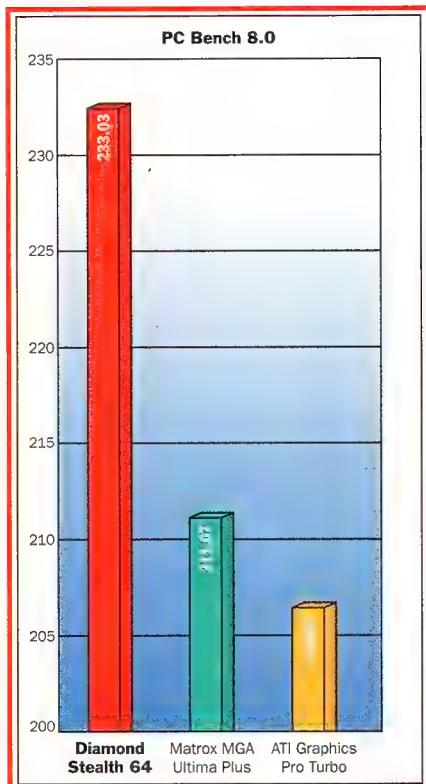
actually play Frankenstein's monster. The quest is to discover who you are (or were) and to find out why you died and how your various squidgey bits fell into the hands of Dr Weirdo.

The graphics have been produced using the now obligatory 3D Studio/Silicon Graphics method with blue-screened live action footage superimposed over the top. Although still only early in development, the quality of all of this is top notch and the live action stuff is worthy of particular note.



NO CONTEST.

"Stealth 64 VL-Bus card blazes in every Windows and DOS application. It will make your old 486 feel like a double speed Pentium... I give it two thumbs up for excellence in all categories, as well as for being the fastest graphics accelerator card I've ever worked with. Obviously, the top pick for best performance is Diamond's Stealth 64." — Greg Loveria, *BYTE Magazine*, July 1994



Source for test results: *Computer Shopper*, September 1994, using PC Bench 8.0 on a Diamond Multimedia Stealth 64 PCI using Micron Magnum 4100 486DX4-100MHz system with DOS 6.2, 32MB RAM, and 256k cache. *InfoWorld*, July 25, 1994, VidMark 8 bit test.



Best Buy
September, 1994

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SMALL OBJECTS OF DESIRE



The section where you can find out which of the new peripherals are hot. And which are not.

A DISAPPOINTING NEW ENTRY INTO THE WORLD OF MPEG BOARDS FROM AZTECH

VIDEO GALAXY OSCAR

After a slow start, it seems that just about every vendor in the world of PC hardware is launching an MPEG card.

One such board is the Video Galaxy Oscar from Singapore manufacturer Aztech. This is a two-thirds length board standalone built around C-Cube MPEG decoder chips. Unlike many of the latest models, there are a few jumpers that must be used to configure it for use – if you have a lot of multimedia kit in your PC, you'll almost certainly have to fiddle with the settings for DMA or interrupt. Other jumpers control the way in which memory is addressed, the I/O address and whether or not the on-board IDE interface will be enabled.

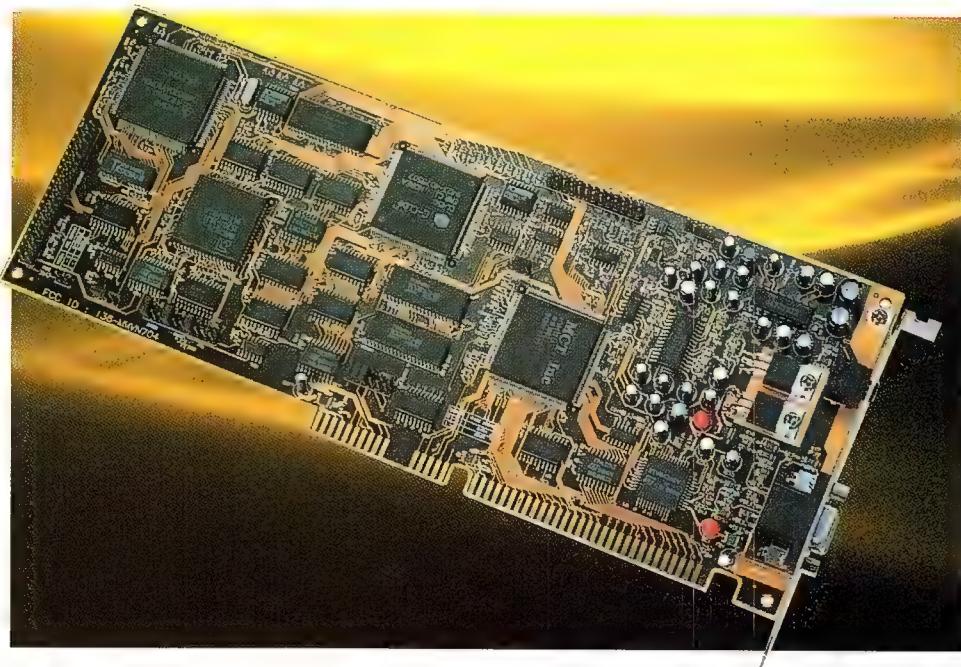
Confusingly, the software supplied with the card provides a dialog box with hardware settings in it, but omits to mention that you can change the options until you're blue in the face – it won't do anything until you whip the card out and fiddle with that as well.

Picture quality is reasonable, provided you keep to a small window, but once you start to blow the image up, and particularly when it's full screen, you'll notice quite a bit of pixelation, to a degree that seems substantially worse than on many of the other cards we have looked at.

Where the card really falls down, however, as with so many on the market at the moment, is in the quality of the software that's provided. There's no DOS playback software, and the Windows package is inadequately covered in the manual (most things, to be frank, are inadequately covered by the manual).

The software provides you with a metaphorical software 'remote control', designed to make things simple to use. There are also menu bars available (unless you've turned them off, in favour of a 'pocket TV' display with a grey border) which provide a whole host of options for moving the image around (but not enough to completely remove the pink border), or skipping to the next track. As usual, there isn't an option for programming selections or picking tracks by name from a VideoCD. I still don't understand why the manufacturers of MPEG boards find this such a difficult concept – the track information is encoded onto all VideoCDs and should be easy enough for any program to read.

There are three buttons on the remote control, and



Nice looking piece of kit, eh? Shame the software lets it down.

corresponding menu options, for loading an MPEG file, a Karaoke CD, or a CD-i disc. Most MPEG software uses the Karaoke option to play VideoCDs. This software gave an error message. It also gave an error message when I tried to open a file directly from the CD, but was quite happy to play a single (random) track from the disc when I clicked the CD-i button. Digital Video (CD-i) discs, thankfully, played all the way through.

It should be obvious that this is not desirable behaviour. Nor is the installation by default of an initialisation program that causes the SCSI bus on some systems to lock up.

Good try Aztech, but previous experience with MPEG cards has shown that the driver software can make or break performance. To be fair, the early versions of software for some other cards were more problematic than this, but even so, there's definitely room for improvement.

Price £233.83 (inc VAT)
Contact Aztech 01734 814121

Nigel Whitfield



A 16-BIT GENERAL MIDI CARD THAT SOUNDS LIKE A GOOD BUY FOR GAMERS

GRAVIS ULTRASOUND ACE

Now that most games support it, having a sound card which offers General MIDI – a standard which uses Wavetable sounds to produce audio which actually sounds like music rather than a £20 Casio keyboard – is an absolute must for the dedicated gamer.

Not so long ago there seemed little point in choosing an (often costly) 16-bit General MIDI-compatible sound card over a cheap and cheerful 8-bit SoundBlaster compatible as so few games supported the extra capabilities. As a result, thousands of users still have rudimentary boards, such as the original SoundBlaster and SoundBlaster Pro, installed in their PCs.

Unfortunately, changing to a 16-bit sound system can be fraught with difficulties. Many

'advanced' boards simply aren't supported directly in games, forcing the user to fall back on an 8-bit SoundBlaster compatibility mode. A bad situation is worsened by the fact that the SoundBlaster support on these cards can often be surprisingly flaky.

To put this into perspective, I've tested dozens of sound cards over the years, and yet in my main PC at home I still use a SoundBlaster Pro. It's reliable, doesn't need software drivers tinkering with and, best of all, I know that it's going to work with all the games I throw at it. .

And so on to the Advanced Gravis Ultrasound ACE – a card for people like me. Rather than being an advanced version of the standard Ultrasound, like the MAX (reviewed in our October 1994 issue), the ACE is a cut-down model. There are no CD-ROM interfaces and gone are the recording capabilities and the joystick/MIDI ports – surprising omissions considering that Gravis has always pitched the Ultrasound boards to musicians and gamers.

Surprising that is, until you realise that ACE stands for Audio Card Enhancer. It isn't intended to be used alone (although it can be), but designed to be installed in a PC alongside an existing SoundBlaster compatible.

Although much has been stripped out, the ACE still fully supports the Ultrasound standard, and can therefore produce stereo 16-bit CD-quality sound across 32 digital channels with unique, and rather excellent, 3D effects. Compare and contrast to the original SoundBlaster's specification of mono 8-bit sound at 11kHz.

The Ultrasound standard is well supported in games these

Stereo 16-bit CD-quality sound across 16 digital channels and excellent 3D effects. What more could you want?

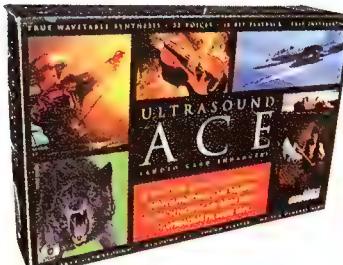
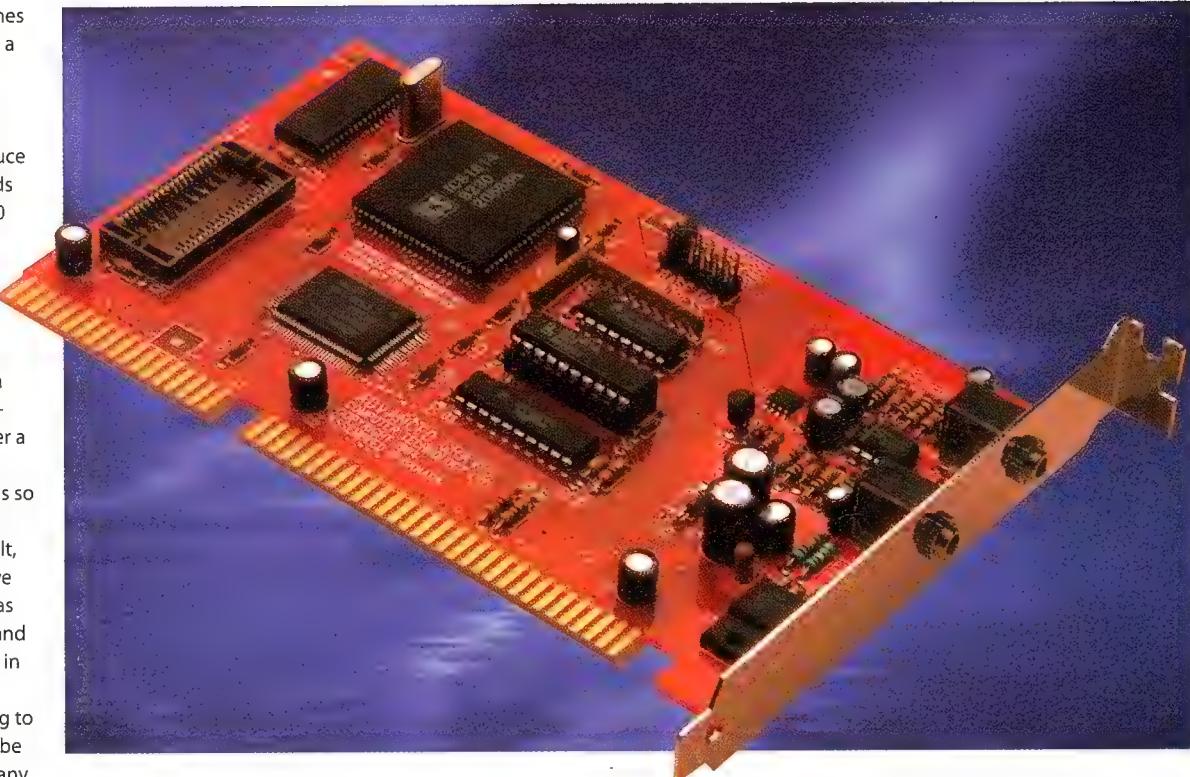
days, but should you find a game which doesn't support it directly, you can always use the card's General MIDI, Roland MT-32 and SCC-1 emulation modes. In the unlikely event that you find a game which doesn't support these either, or if you find that the emulation doesn't work (it isn't quite 100 percent perfect – games which use DOS4GW are incompatible), you can simply fall back on your SoundBlaster.

Most games are now capable of supporting two cards simultaneously, so it's possible to use General MIDI from the ACE for the music and your original card for the digital sound effects. Some single cards can achieve this, including the excellent SoundFX Classic 3000 from Bluepoint (reviewed in our October 1994 issue), but most only support mono SoundBlaster digital audio. Providing your original SoundBlaster-compatible (such as a Pro or 16) is stereo you'll still get the stereo sound effects, plus glorious music from the ACE.

In many cases, however, if a game supports the Ultrasound directly, this is the mode to use. Doom, for instance, uses the 3D sound capabilities of the card and the result is unmatched by any other sound board with this game.

Installation of the ACE is thankfully very easy – the user needs to adjust the system address setting manually with a plastic jumper on the board, but the default has been sensibly chosen so it shouldn't conflict with other boards. Software enables the user to choose IRQ and DMA settings, thoughtfully showing the settings used by other interface cards in the system. Unlike many boards, the ACE uses no base memory at all once installed – a very welcome feature.

Setting up the Windows drivers could have been a potential problem, but Gravis has thought this through, with the default set-up running MIDI through the ACE, leaving the digital audio (both playback and recording) to the existing board. Despite this,





ORCHID'S 24-BIT CARD TAKES A SHINE TO MPEG

ORCHID KELVIN MPEG



Orchid's Kelvin MPEG card even supports those with a Warped sense of humour.

One of the biggest hassles for anyone wanting to add MPEG playback facilities to their PC is making the video card and the MPEG card work together. As we've seen over the last few months, several people have tackled the problem by producing combined graphics and MPEG cards.

One of the latest (we tested a pre-release version) is the Kelvin MPEG from Orchid. It's based around the Kelvin 64 graphics card, with an MPEG chipset from Sigma Designs, creator of RealMagic. In fact, the MPEG side of the board is compatible with RealMagic to the extent that it was supplied with the Sigma set-up program and drivers. According to Orchid, there will be special drivers and utilities by the time the card ships, but the RealMagic compatibility will be a boon to many.

Strictly speaking, the MPEG card isn't 100 percent the same as RealMagic. Firstly, it has 24-bit colour, which means that the pictures are a little less blotchy, and secondly, there are two extra utilities, one of which enables or disables the MPEG decode. In fact, what it seems to do is simply turn the video overlay on or off, since MPEG sound is still played back when the decoder has been 'turned off' by the utility. Hopefully, Orchid will produce an OS/2 version of the program; there are OS/2 drivers for the Kelvin 64, which worked fine, and the OS/2 RealMagic driver played back the sound but wasn't able to manage the picture as the utility only works with DOS

and Windows. Fix that, and Warp users will be glad of an alternative to Sigma's card. The only other extra facility is a second audio output, giving you a choice between an amplified or line level output.

Graphics performance is as found on the Kelvin 64 – it's based around a Cirrus chipset and offers pretty reasonable, though not sparkling performance. Only certain modes support the MPEG playback, but it is possible to have 24-bit MPEG appearing on the screen when Windows is only running with 256 colours.

Picture quality is the most important thing, and the Kelvin is certainly better than RealMagic, though perhaps not quite up to the standard of some of the other cards. But if you consider that damning, bear in mind that we were testing a 24-bit card with Sigma's drivers for the 15-bit RealMagic. It's not an ideal combination, and when there was a lot of information to pass through to the card – Queen's Breakthrough video was one particularly bad case – the result was dropouts on the soundtrack. Picture quality remained fine throughout, and with specially written drivers, things should improve.

On the basis of what we saw from the pre-release version, when the Kelvin MPEG starts shipping, it should be well worth watching.

Price £405.38 (inc VAT)
Contact Orchid 01256 479898

Nigel Whitfield

BACKGROUND COURTESY OF FOCAL TONE INT LTD, TEL: 01785 712 66 / FROM GU 2 BACKGROUND PHOTO COLLECTION.

if Windows comes across a 16-bit sound sample, it will automatically use the ACE. Strange but true, and transparent to the user, so not a problem.

A lead is supplied to connect the output from an existing board to the input of the ACE (the sound levels can be adjusted with the Ultrasound's mixer software). An alternative is to use two sets of speakers, which in some circumstances does have its advantages. Cost-cutting has meant that there's no on-board amplifier, so there's no headphone socket, just a line-out for connecting active (powered) speakers or a hi-fi amplifier.

An excellent CD-ROM is included in the package, which includes a host of MIDI files, game and graphics demos, MIDISOFT Recording Session and more. Annoyingly, it includes the set-up software for the Ultrasound, but none specifically for the ACE – installation must therefore be done from the supplied floppy disks. Another gripe is the manual, which is Ultrasound specific – a leaflet adds relevant information and advises purchasers of the ACE which bits to ignore. Still when that's all a reviewer can find to criticise, it's got to be a good sign.

It could be easy to fall into the trap of believing that the ACE is only designed for gamers. With few multimedia titles employing 16-bit sound, and only a smattering using MIDI sound, the ACE could, admittedly, be a wasted investment for someone who doesn't play games. However, the card is suitable for (budding) musicians.

The 512K of on-board RAM (upgradable to 1Mb) into which sound samples are loaded, is retained from the Ultrasound MAX, and providing your original board has a MIDI port, the set-up is equally as good as cards costing several times as much.

The original Ultrasound has proved to be very popular among the gaming community, but its software-driven SoundBlaster emulation has always let it down. So much so in fact that many owners re-fitted their old SoundBlaster cards to run alongside it. This is undoubtedly the reasoning behind the release of the Ultrasound ACE, and it's a smart move on Gravis' part.

Owners of SoundBlaster 16s and similar have the option of plugging in a Wavetable daughterboard, such as Creative's WaveBlaster, to their boards. This has the advantage of saving an expansion slot in your machine and, like the ACE, adds General MIDI compatibility.

What you won't get with these, of course, is an Ultrasound mode. And that's the great thing about having an ACE installed alongside a SoundBlaster compatible – it means you have all the options covered. Not only are you assured that the sound of every game on the planet works with your PC, you actually get the chance to hear the games at their best. Nice job Gravis, very nice.

Price RRP around £93 (inc VAT)
Contact Zye Technology 01293 538666

Warren Chrimson



LOW-COST GRAPHICS CARD OFFERING VIDEO ACCELERATION AND MPEG PLAYBACK

MIRO VIDEO 12PD

The 12PD is primarily a VGA graphics card, but it also offers video acceleration – extremely useful for anyone hoping to make the most of multimedia, and MPEG playback support via software.

Installation is a pretty simple affair; the version of the card that we tested was fitted with 1Mb of memory, and designed for VESA Local Bus slots, although there are versions with 2Mb and PCI bus connectors available. Unlike other cards equipped for MPEG, there aren't any audio connections, and the only output on the back panel is the VGA connection for your monitor. Internally there's a VESA feature connection, which will allow you to hook up various other graphics gizmos, like TV cards and suchlike.

As is now the norm, the Miro comes complete with a set of utilities, to allow easy changing of resolution, without all that tedious messing about in Windows Setup. There's also a monitor program, which can be used to tell the graphics software about the maximum refresh rate that your display is capable of, and a magnification program for zooming in on part of the screen. Everything is installed easily from the set-up program, and we had no problems making things work with our test system.

The picture from the card was quite acceptable in Windows (CAD drivers are also provided, if you're into that sort of thing), and turned in a reasonable – if not stunning – performance in our tests. The bonus is the extra chip on board designed to help speed up Video for Windows. This also allows you to make your CD-ROM playback video window larger, without the penalties of jerkiness which is the norm for software video.

We duly ran through our favourite clips of fluffy animals as large as possible, and the results were impressive, with none of the misery of dropped frames that you'd expect on a non-video capable card. The one drawback is that the pictures do end up looking a little pixelated when you've blown them up, and there's no pixel interpolation going on (in real English, that means glossing over the edges of the blocks). Yes, you can find cards that will do that sort of thing – like VideoLogic's 928Movie, but you certainly can't find them for £145, which is the going rate for the 1Mb version of the 12PD.

Bear in mind that you'll pay around that for even the most basic upgrade graphics card these days, and the Miro does look something of a bargain. Even more so considering its MPEG playback facilities. The lowest price MPEG board seen thus far costs more than £250. However, where these contain specialist chips to decode the MPEG, the Miro uses software. That's not actually as unusual as it seems – there are plenty of software MPEG players available, but these can be pretty slow, unless you're gifted with a hefty workstation. The technique behind the Miro cards is to make use of the video acceleration to improve the software MPEG performance.



Want a cheap graphics board that offers that bit more for multimedia? Look no further.

The MPEG software that we saw was a fairly early version, and you can expect that it will have had some major work done on it before it finally ships to end users, but it was certainly promising stuff, if you're prepared to overlook the faults.

The extent to which MPEG playback in software is possible is, of course, debatable. One of the main drawbacks to software MPEG is that you're likely to need pretty hefty processing power. You can probably forget it if you're running on anything less than a 486DX2 with 8Mb of memory, and to read MPEG off CD quickly enough to cache and process the data, it's unlikely that a single, or even double-speed, CD-ROM drive will be sufficient.

The results from the test system were reasonable, provided we kept the window fairly small, and it was possible to play information back from both hard disk and CD-ROM. It wasn't, unfortunately, possible to use VideoCDs to test the system, but that is a problem that is being addressed, and is almost certainly down to the drivers – the VideoCD format can be very unforgiving of any flaws in the driver software.

Miro claims that the final MPEG software will allow people to play tracks from VideoCD discs, with an interface looking something like a video recorder. If it's a hit with the 12PD, then it's probably going to be extended across the whole range of Miro boards with video acceleration.

It's hard to give a firm conclusion from such an early version of the software, but gut feeling suggests that this could be a very handy add-on for people with high-power PCs who don't want a dedicated MPEG playback board taking up valuable slots. Ironically, if you're not the owner of a beefy PC, the expensive hardware MPEG is almost certainly the only way to go.



Price Around £145 (inc VAT)
Contact Miro 01494 510250

Nigel Whitfield

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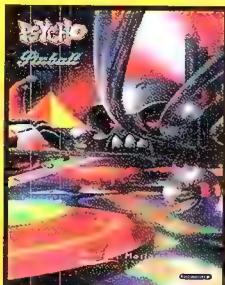
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SMALLTOWN HEROES

The old guys of the music biz have gone interactive as much out of boredom as a greed for greens. But Mat Toor spoke to four lads from Sunderland, hoping to make multimedia history with the first CD-ROM single

Smalltown Heroes

CD-ROM is the menopause of rock 'n' roll. Old rockers with hi-tech studios and money to burn have grown tired of re-recording the three chord trick and are now looking for new avenues to express their 'artistic' talents.

Record companies humour them because they know, one way or another, that enough of the star's established fan base will fork out £40 or so for his or her multimedia doodlings.

But these middle-aged and millionaire pioneers, with their Swiss villas andMontserrat recording studios, have been joined by a new army of explorers, a rock 'n' roll band called the Smalltown Heroes, who release the world's first CD-ROM 'single' this month.

Never heard of the Smalltown Heroes? That's because Moral Judgement is not only the world's first CD-ROM-enhanced CD single, it's the band's first single. Period.

Unlike Gabriel, Bowie, Prince and company, the Heroes are a band on the first rung of the rock 'n' roll ladder. But they are heading in the right direction. Not long ago, these four guys from Sunderland were, in their own words, "supporting the bingo" in their local Working Men's Club. Now they're about to support rock

legend Jeff Healy on his latest tour and their record company EG — home to Roxy Music and T-Rex among others — has spent tens of thousands of pounds to put a multimedia 'bonus track' on their debut single.

So how is it that a band like the Smalltown Heroes — who don't own a computer between them and aren't even that fond of modern musical aids such as synthesisers, samplers and drum machines — can end up making multimedia history?

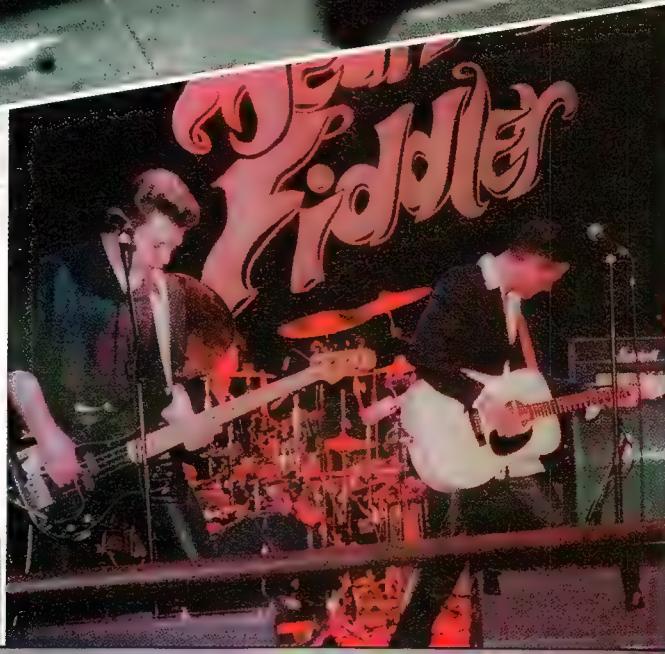
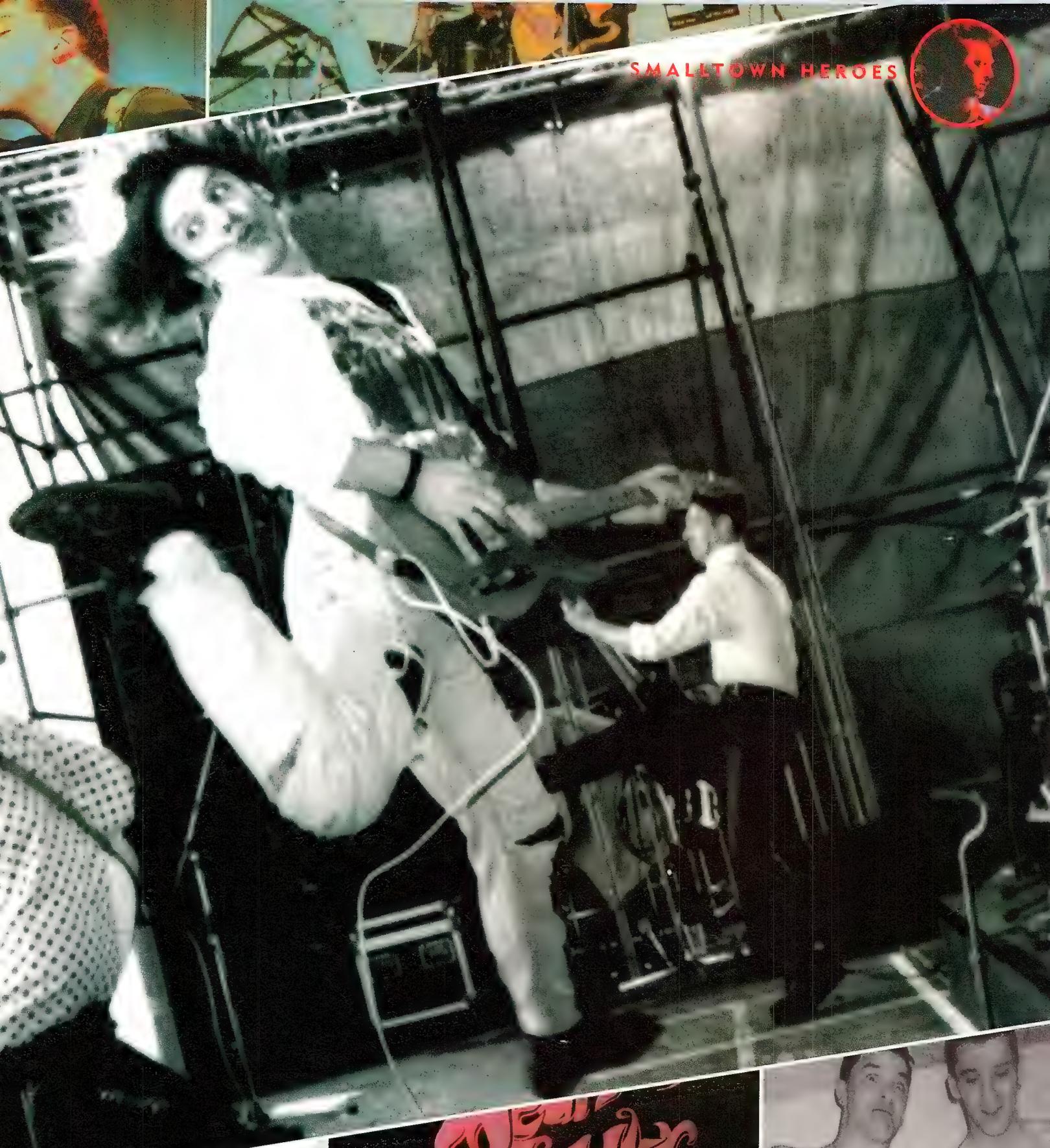
"The band aren't particularly technical but they said that they needed a way to get their point across and let people know who they are," recalls their manager Harvey Lee. From this 'mission to explain', the idea of a CD-ROM element to their debut single began to emerge.

"We were aware of what Peter Gabriel and Mike Oldfield had done with albums and specific CD-ROM products, but we thought here was a way to use this technology in a new way and achieve what we wanted with this single," says Lee, emphasising that from the very beginning it was a 50:50 collaboration between the band and the record company.

The band's own recollection, though, is slightly different: Lead guitarist 'Baz' Warne says the CD-ROM idea originated with EG's chairman Sam Alder and that the band initially had some doubts about



The band's brief to multimedia developer The Last Museum Catalogue was: no arty bollocks, thank you very much. Clearly, if anyone's going to handle their bollocks, it will be the band themselves.





SMALLTOWN HEROES



the move. "We were very worried that the CD-ROM would overshadow the music," says Baz. "We were a bit naive, we didn't have a great idea what it was all about. We were a bit doubtful about it becoming the focal point of the release."

Whoever came up with the idea originally, it was clear that a cerebral and overtly sophisticated CD-ROM track would not sit comfortably with the band's particular brand of high-sweat, low-tech rock-'n'-roll. So when EG approached multimedia developer The Last Museum Catalogue (the story behind the name is too involved to relate here) about the project the brief was to the point: no arty bollocks, thank you very much.

"It's very simple," says Michael Denyer, producer at The Last Museum Catalogue. "There were all kinds of things we proposed but as clients they kept saying no."

The interface you will see if you play the hybrid Macintosh and PC CD-ROM track on the EP is a simple montage of Smalltown Heroes pics. A simple menu provides access to the CD's DA audio tracks – complete with on-screen lyrics – and a clutch of QuickTime videos, including a promo specially shot at Pinewood Studios and 'previously unseen' footage of the band playing live. In addition, a controllable time line provides an audio-visual history of the band's various incarnations over the last five years.

"It's a long way from Xplora," says Denyer. "The idea was that people could have a simple interface, click-and-play immediacy. It's an interesting approach – as multimedia producers, you like to impress your peers with lots of hi-tech bells and whistles, but they just said keep it simple and straightforward."

That simplicity also helps keeps the production costs down, but Lee insists his motives were artistic rather than commercial. "We're not making this as a

Besides the audio tracks, there's a clutch of QuickTime videos with a promo shot at Pinewood and previously unseen footage of the band playing live.

novelty or a game. It's music videos and entertainment. There's no climbing up ladders or exploring the lads' bedrooms, we want to appeal to kids who are into music rather than computer fanatics."

The band are happy, too.

"Because of the sort of old-fashioned band that we are, we've embraced it to a certain extent. We're excited by it, but the music is the main thing," says 'Baz' Warne.

The only question now is who's going to buy the single when it goes on sale this month? "That's a real puzzle. The Smalltown Heroes have been on the scene a good while but no-one's sure what kind of fan base they've got," says Steve Helmsley, special projects editor of the music biz bible *Music Week*.

The fact that the Moral Judgement single will cost more than its peers – although Lee insists the price premium won't be that big – could also scare off the impulse purchaser.

The reality is that the 'interactive' angle is likely to be milked vigorously to give the single a distinctive 'unique selling proposition' in a very crowded marketplace.

Exposure in magazines and other media could then open DJs' doors and provide the single with the essential oxygen of radio airplay. "It could be a very good promotional tool for them, if it's marketed well enough," says *Music Week*'s Helmsley. "Not only could it help them get the airplay, it might make it easier for them to pick up the distributors they need to get the single into the shops."

But Lee says he's not using technology simply for marketing or promotional purposes. "It's most definitely not a novelty one-off. It's the start of a regular thing for us." He maintains that every single the Smalltown Heroes release from now on will contain a CD-ROM track – not just videos and lyrics, but guitar chords to the songs and possibly even a tutorial from the band – and that EG is thinking about doing the same with other artists in its repertoire.

"Everyone's sweated blood at some stage to make this whole thing work, and we've shown that you don't have to be in the financial league of Peter Gabriel to make music more interactive. We're not aiming at people with large disposable incomes, we're hitting regular record shops with a CD people can play on their ordinary CD player or, if they want to get more out of it, on their PC. That's a real achievement."

And it could be, through a happy coincidence of financial restraints and artistic intent, EG Records and the Smalltown Heroes have established a beachhead for the next generation of mainstream interactive music product: hybrid audio/data discs, with simple interfaces, containing information like videos and lyrics that is easy to grasp for the generation brought up on MTV and *The Chart Show*.

Whether the music fans want to or not will emerge over the next few months. But certainly the lads from Sunderland, almost despite themselves, reckon this is the start of something big.

"We can see that this is the way things are starting to move now. The computer age, the 1990s, and all that," says lead singer Chris Warne (Baz's brother). "Alright, we may be the first people to bring out a single like this, but we're certainly not going to be the last..."

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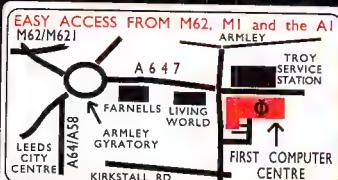
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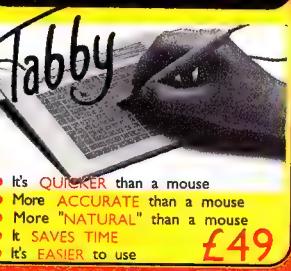
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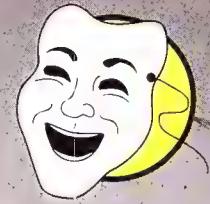
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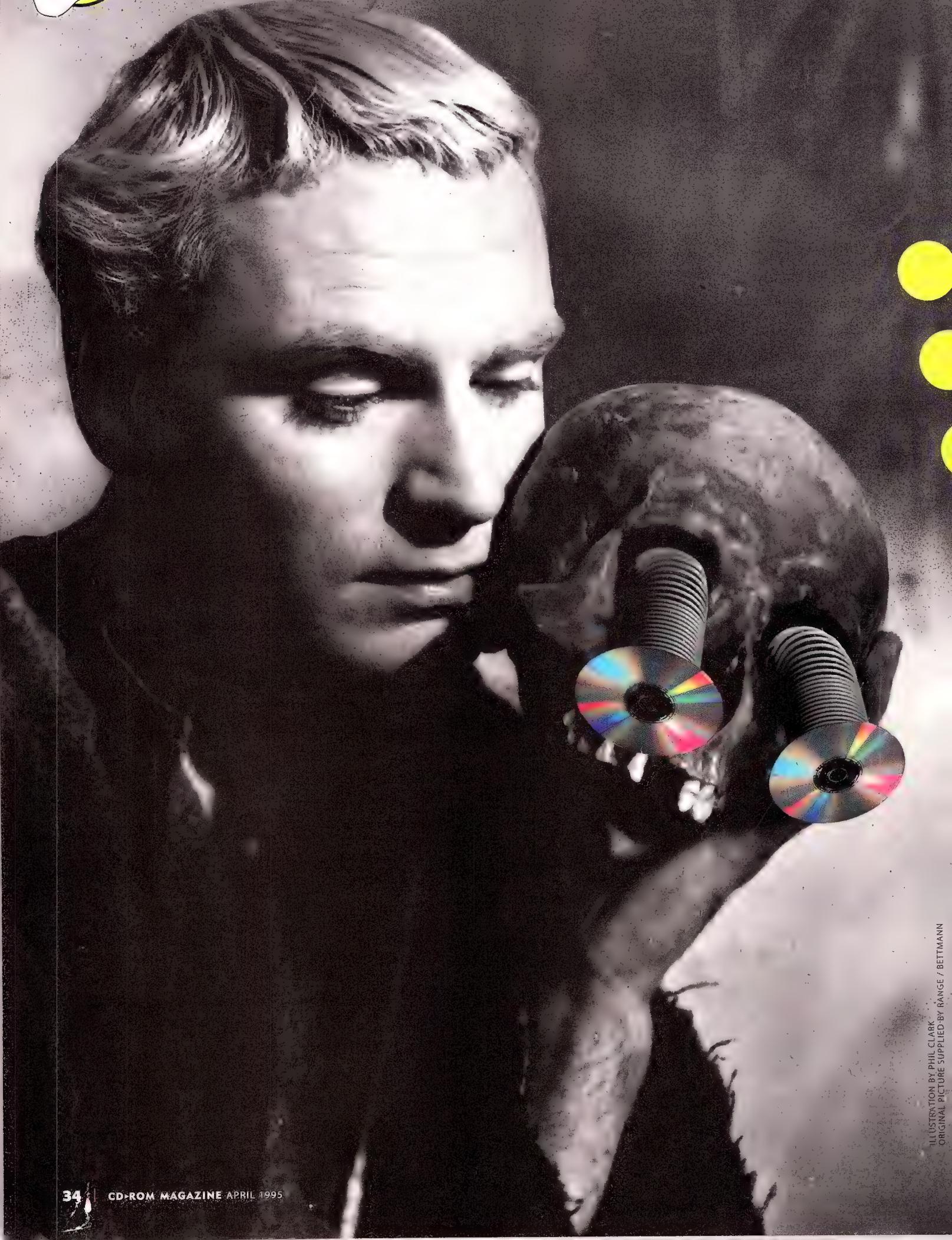
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SILICON BROADWAY





**Move over Hollywood, Silicon
Broadway has arrived!
CD-ROM developers are
learning that if you want
genuinely**

Silicon Broadway

**interactive products
you need to consult the
experts – the theatre
professionals who day in and
day out interact with their
audiences. Gene Koprowski
reports on how the Luvvies are
going interactive...**

You've heard a lot about Silicon Hollywood, the fabled fusion of talents from the computer and motion picture industries. But then you saw the results – CD-ROMs that starred big names from the Screen Actors Guild, and exhibited great graphics, but offered really lame games that were not much fun to play.

There's generally three minutes of film, and a yes or no choice for CD-ROM gamers to make. In short, the games are very linear, and not very challenging.

The solution, according to games creators DC-True, Viacom New Media and Imagination Pilots is to call in the interactive luvvies:

These American companies, coming to the conclusion that players want a true, interactive experience, have turned to a branch of the US entertainment industry that has had experience creating interactive productions – the theatre community. Industry observers have been tagging the trend 'Silicon Broadway' where the talents of computer games, theatre producers and stars merge.

Games on the conveyor belt from Silicon Broadway include DC-True's CyberJudas, a game where you pretend to be the President of the United States, fighting off traitors in your Cabinet;





SILICON BROADWAY



Tommy Lee Jones (above) goes into his psychotic chuckle routine in *Blown Away*. But developers Imagination Pilots adopted theatrical as well as cinematic techniques to produce the game.

Are You Afraid of the Dark? by Viacom New Media, where you try to escape from a haunted theatre; and *Blown Away* from Imagination Pilots.

The developers of these games say theatre professionals have an expertise at creating non-linear productions, in which the audience is intimately involved – something that is sorely lacking in many discs.

According to Robin Antonick, president of DC True, the set designers and actors – many of whom have won awards for their work on Broadway – working on CyberJudas have brought "skills that are necessary to engage the audience, to make it a part of the production. These people are very good at designing sets that interact with the audience."

Nancy Adams, a Chicago-based actress who has done both theatre and film work explains the difference. "Theatre acting is much broader and more physical than that required for film. The actors have to produce larger body movements in theatre; their emotions have to be exaggerated. They're trying to reach the folks in the back row of the audience. In film, it's just the opposite."

Adams also says that lighting and makeup, are different in theatre than in film. Makeup is applied in greater quantity in theatre; it has to seem more convincing. Lighting must be more heavy-handed, realistic; again, to be convincing. This 'enhanced realism' when applied to video games helps make the interactive experience more involving than Hollywood-style naturalism, supporters claim.

Working at Viacom New Media, the owners of MTV and children's channel



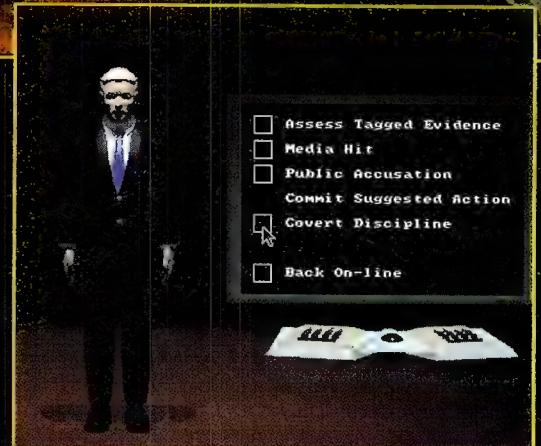
Nickelodeon Networks, is producer Raymond Benson. He wanted to create a CD-ROM product for kids, bearing the Nickelodeon brand name. The producers wanted to use a graphic novel-type storytelling method to advance the story line. The graphic novel – or grovel, in the producers' parlance – tied in with a children's TV show called *Are You Afraid of the Dark?* The program showed children telling scary stories around a campfire at night.

Says Benson: "The idea was the kids would start the story, and the CD-ROM player would direct the game towards its ultimate solution. If the player performed well, he or she would be invited to join the Midnight Society, the club the kids on the TV show have created."

Starting in November 1993, the creators of the CD-ROM brainstormed with freelance writers and other theatrical talent, to create the script. The result was a 380-page interactive screenplay called *The Tale of Orpheo's Curse*. Ironically, the game itself is set in an abandoned vaudeville theatre in Chicago, and is packed with theatrical references and set-pieces. Through the coming months, the screenplay underwent several revisions, including testing on audiences.

"Until this project was done, we had no idea of how big it was," said Benson. "It was huge. But it had to be. We created a very non-linear, exploratory environment with a branching story line."

The CD-ROM is the first scary product released for children, claims Benson. "It blends several visual styles – video, 3-D rendering, illustration and animation. It is a true multimedia product bringing together the talents of software developers, network executives, television people and theatrical people. The company spent more than a year in development and each



Don't Be Afraid Of The Dark (top) builds on campfire story-telling tradition. *CyberJudas* adopts a more modern narrative vernacular.

Both Blown Away (top) and **Don't Be Afraid Of The Dark** seek to avoid the old interactive movie clichés.

artistic team worked on its part of the project independently, with the final product being integrated by the director and producers."

Meanwhile, at Chicago-based Imagination Pilots, president Howard Tullman and his team are working on Blown Away, a CD-ROM sequel to the movie starring Jeff Bridges and Tommy Lee Jones.

The game has been developed with MGM Interactive. Imagination Pilots wrote its own script, and hired its own actors for the project.

But in developing the game, Imagination Pilots was careful to avoid repeating the clichés that have bedevilled most CD-ROM-based 'interactive movies'. Says Tullman: "One of our objectives was not to have a 10-minute opening video, where the world ends and in the year 2000 a million things have happened, and by the time the video finishes you've fallen asleep."

Instead, the player wakes up in the hospital, having made a poor decision when dismantling a bomb. Tullman continues: "The player can interact with a variety of story lines. We put the player into the 3-D environment. To get out of the secure hospital room, the player must open a door, which is controlled by a security device. To open the device, the player must solve a complex numerical puzzle. Even if you fail this part, the game still advances and you don't have to get blown up 14 times before you can move on."

Another innovation that borrows from the improvising ad-libbing conventions of theatre is the option to 'drop out' using the linear plot-led video and concentrate on the interactive game-play. This option lets the

player retain control over the game; not be controlled by the Hollywood movie. Moreover, players can go to a menu of the games, such as a pinball labyrinth, or word games, and practise them as many times as they want. This allows players to perfect their strategy, and even attempt to set all-time high scores in the game. Then, they can play the full video and compete to win.

According to Tullman, the move towards true interactivity is needed to recapture the core group of gamers who have been loyal buyers and players for years. "Games must have the ability to be replayed again and again by the core audience of CD-ROM gamers. And they must be enjoyed by newcomers too."

Though these game makers are trying to infuse theatrical interactivity into their products, they also want to capitalise on the marketing muscle of Hollywood.

MGM and Imagination Pilots for example, have placed a trailer for Blown Away on the video rental title of the same name.

"Not only is there cross marketing on the Blown Away video but the game trailer is also being placed on the videos for movies *The Client*, *Tombstone*, and *Wyatt Earp*. And what we've also done is place a trailer of the movie in the game."

Theatres, especially in Chicago, also engage in a lot of cross promotions. Used ticket stubs can often be redeemed at restaurants in the area for reduced price meals. So even in this area, these innovators are merging the talents of Broadway and Silicon Valley to bring CD-ROMs to a wider audience. Since the theatre community in Chicago is characterised by innovation – most new American productions are created or have their first runs here – the pollination of ideas is sure to benefit those who enjoy CD-ROMs, and those looking for a true, interactive, multimedia experience. The Luvies have been interactive since the days of Shakespeare; for them, stimulating the audience is second nature.



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INSIDE THIS SECTION

In this section we review the best of the current crop of reference and education discs, providing a rating out of five and a verdict box which details the category of each product under review, the supplier's name and telephone number and any special requirements.

Rating Each game is rated out of five for its playability and use of multimedia, using the toolbar below.



Category

This toolbar indicates the 'genre' of the package under review; the icons show:

Reference Entertainment
Education Business

Platform

MAC MPC CD 3DO
The hardware on which the title plays is indicated by the display panel above.

Requirements Special hardware requirements are laid out in the verdict box of each respective review. If there are no requirements listed, you can safely assume that the game can be played on the current entry-level machine on each of the supported platforms. These are:

MAC An LC with 4Mb RAM, a CD-ROM drive and a 256-colour 13/14in monitor.

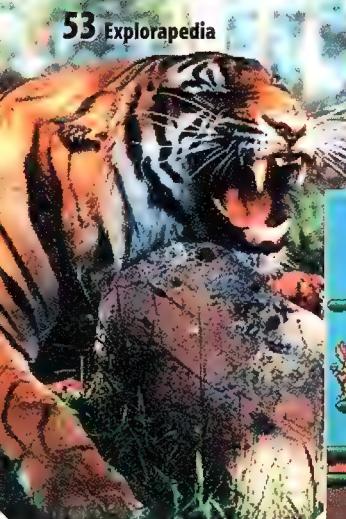
MPC A 25MHz 386 PC with 4Mb RAM, Windows 3.1, a sound card, a VGA monitor and a double-speed CD-ROM drive.

CD-i The CD-i 210 base unit.

3DO The 3DO base unit.

TITLES

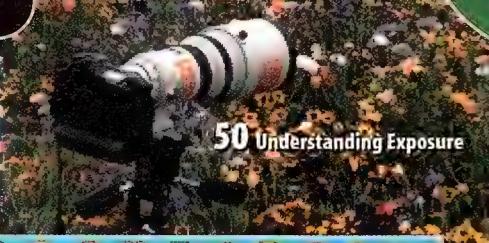
53 Explorapedia



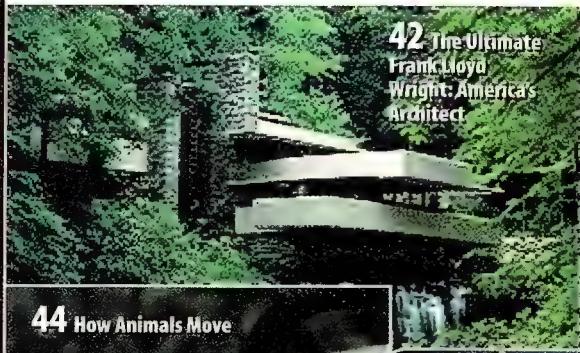
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50 Understanding Exposure



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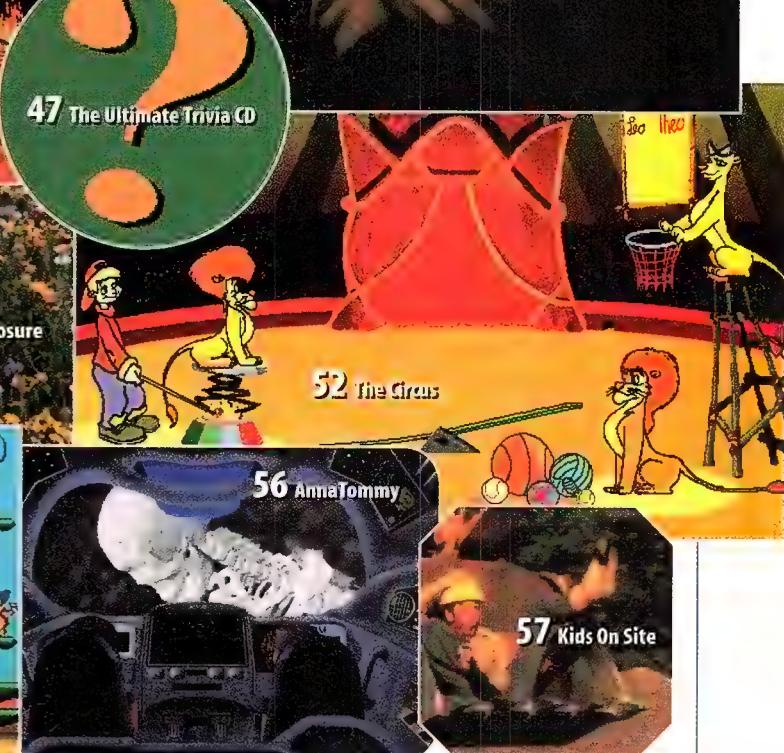
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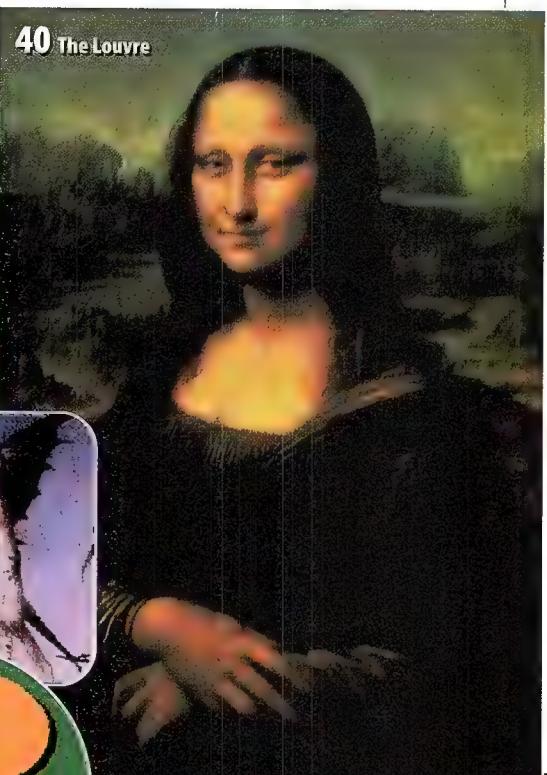
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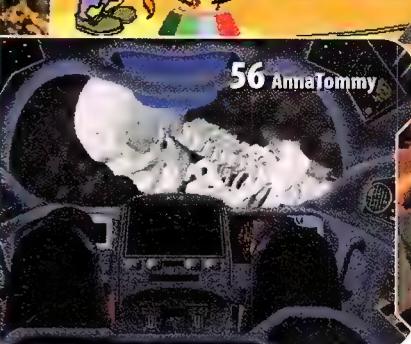
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56 AnnaTommy



57 Kids On Site





TITLEs

THE LOUVRE

This multimedia guide to one of the world's most exciting art galleries is an engrossing, hugely enjoyable success

When Microsoft took the National Gallery's multimedia guide and turned it into the Microsoft Art Gallery, it won top accolades wherever it was seen. As the first example of an art collection to be put on CD-ROM, it set an exacting standard by which future virtual galleries and museums would be judged. Not every attempt has passed muster and now the French national art gallery, the Louvre, has responded with its own multimedia guide.

So far the disc has been a tremendous success in the original French, selling over 12,000 copies in the first few months on sale. Now translated into English, The Louvre is ready to respond to Microsoft's challenge.

Rather than follow the National Gallery example of showing every painting in its permanent collection, The Louvre opts to display just 100 paintings in all. But this is a trade-off decision that has allowed The Louvre to presents those paintings in often stunning detail. One remarkable innovation is a zoom feature that allows you to home in on any detail in of the paintings: simply dragging a square outline around a thumbnail view of the painting interactively displays a greatly enlarged view of that section.

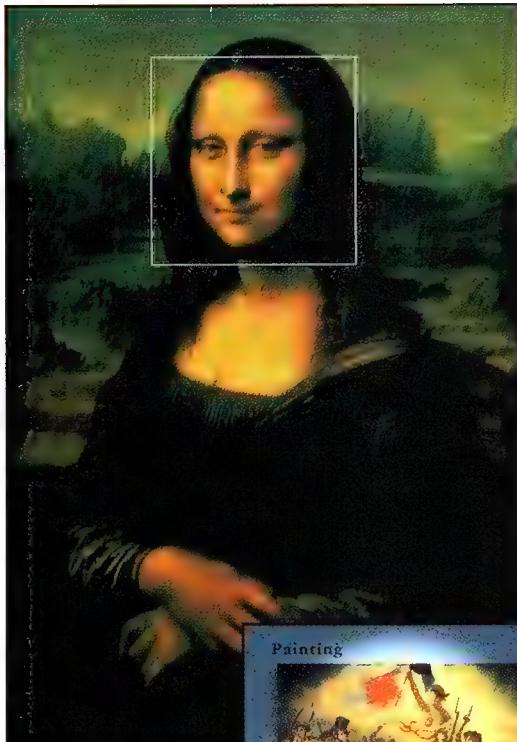
Two and a half hours of recorded commentary provide a detailed analysis of the collection, with a thorough introduction to each painting. Many of the paintings have supplementary commentaries to accompany the detail views, panning automatically around the canvas as the softly spoken voice-over guides you through the minutiae of brushstroke and technique. You can also visually compare the size of the painting with both a human-scale figure and other paintings in the collection. And in many

of the paintings you can opt for a further commentary which gives a critique of their composition, with perspectives and spatial relationships highlighted and drawn in as the composition is explained.

As well as the spoken commentaries, there's a wealth of written background information including biographies of the artists, definitions of technical terms, biographies of royal art collectors, and brief essays on particular schools and styles.



You can examine the painting in detail, panning around the screen...



Zoom in on Mona.



You can choose whether to see where paintings are sited in the Louvre, learn more about Delacroix, for instance, or delve deeper...

Duc de Sully, Napoleonic museum director Vivant Denon) after whom they are named, and the controversial Ieoh Ming Pei, the architect

who designed the pyramid. When compiling a CD of works of art, it's important that due consideration be given to the appearance of the paintings on everyday computer screens – which means making sure they'll work well on an 8-bit, 256-colour monitor, as opposed to the 24-bit, 16 million colour monitors commonly used by graphic artists.

It is impossible to convey the richness and texture of oil



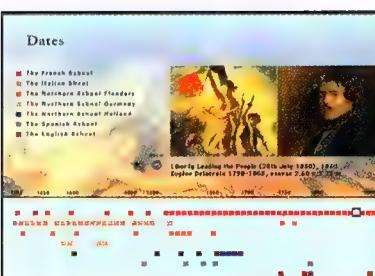
Good use is made of hypertext, whereby you can click on a word in bold print within an article to take you to the article that word relates to.

To view the paintings you're first presented with an overview of the collection, divided into French, Italian, Flanders, German, Dutch, Spanish and English schools, and then subdivided into

centuries. Selecting a school brings up another screen with a background showing one of the paintings, and an accompanying recording of the music of that country and century (although the musical dates here wander somewhat – 18th and 19th Century English paintings are accompanied by a rendition of the 16th century 'Greensleeves').

There's one other major difference between the National Gallery and the Louvre: the architecture of the building itself. Whereas the National Gallery's Georgian classicism has only the pastiche Sainsbury Wing to mark the impact of the 20th Century, the Louvre has a long and respected history of evolution and invention since its medieval origins, culminating in the steel and glass pyramid that now forms the main entrance.

A large portion of the CD is given over to a history of the building, including models showing its development and dozens of photographs of the interior – again accompanied by both voice-overs and contemporary music. The present-day Louvre is also fully documented, with views and descriptions of the various wings that make up the building as well as biographies of the notables (Richlieu, the



...before seeing how it fits in with its artistic contemporaries and what school of art it comes from.



It is possible to study the geometric composition that gives the painting its strength, with a full commentary to accompany the experience.

paints with the standard colour palette used by eight-bit computers, and the usual technique is to create a separate colour palette for each picture, dropping the bright magentas, greens, violets and blues in favour of a wider range of browns, purples and golds typically found in oil paintings. But this would mean that when changing between pictures, the sudden change in colour map would cause the screen to 'stumble' as it redraws, making an unwelcome break in the presentation.

The solution here has been to identify a single colour palette for the whole collection and make all the paintings conform to that. Where colours fall out of range, they have to be

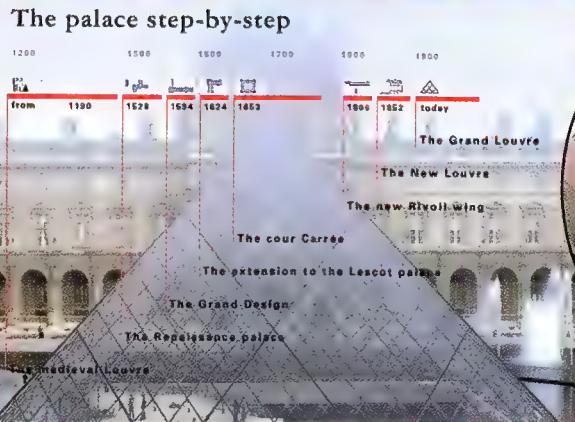
simulated by 'dithering' – creating a pattern of close hues to fool the eye into seeing the missing colour. Fortunately, the range of colours that can be depicted using oil paints is fairly limited, and an accurate colour palette can be created to minimise; but in some instances it inevitably results in ugly flat patches of colour which obscure the delicate brushwork in the detailed views.

Entertaining though the spoken commentary

is – and it's pleasant to have such an effortless introduction to the paintings – it would be useful to have more written detail available.

Overall, though, this CD is hugely enjoyable, and of great interest both to art students and to anyone with a passing interest in paintings. It's like one of those BBC2 documentaries you stumble across by accident, and find yourself engrossed in; except here you're in the driving seat, and you can take it entirely at your own pace.

The Louvre is a tasteful, meticulous coffee-table CD that, like the best coffee table books, you'll find yourself dipping into again and again.



The palace step-by-step

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The Grand Louvre
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The extension to the Lescot gallery
The Grand Design
The Renaissance palace
The medieval Louvre



...through

the use of photographs and models.

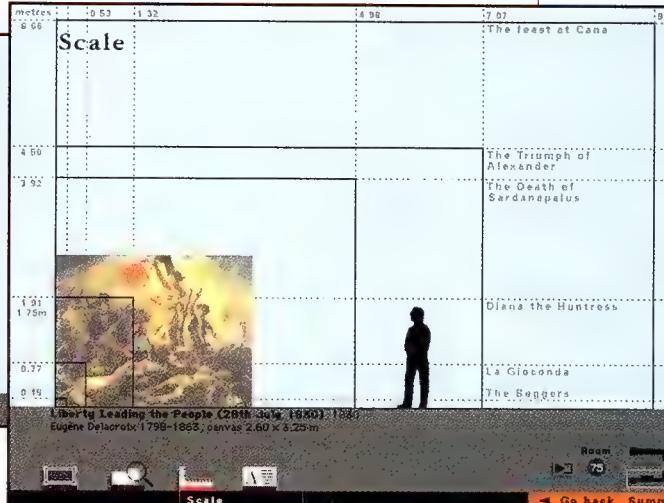
A large portion of the disc examines gallery's 800-year history which can be explored in detail...

Index

Paintings **Rooms** **Biographies**

Portrait of Jean Le Bon
Jean Le Bon (Portrait of Jean Le Bon)
Le Bon (Portrait of Jean Le Bon)
The Villeneuve-lès-Avignon Pietà
Villeneuve-lès-Avignon Pietà (The)
Portrait of Charles VII
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Still Life with a Chessboard
Concert with an Antique Bas-Relief
The Cardsharp with the Ace of Diamonds
Cardsharp with the Ace of Diamonds (The)
Christ with St. Joseph in the Carpenter's Shop

The index is comprehensive, if a little plain – but the information's all there.



Compare the size of paintings with this scale diagram.

VIRTUAL GALLERIES

CD-ROM art gallery catalogues currently offer little more than their printed counterparts, which is why they go to such lengths to provide 'value-added' extras – such as spoken commentaries, animated explanations, interactive close-ups. But it's still a long way from actually being there: you still have no sense that you're inside a gallery, and the curator's craft of hanging and juxtaposing pictures is entirely lost.

Games such as *Myst* have shown how easy it is to suspend willingly our disbelief, how the desire to accept an environment, however artificial, is so strong that we'll let ourselves be taken in by even the most implausible

surroundings. But there is admittedly no way that current CDs can even attempt to emulate that sense of discovery or feeling of presence that you get when visiting an art gallery or a stately home.

But with the advent of QuickTime VR, and Microsoft's Surround Video for Windows 95, all that could change. The development of a true three-dimensional, exploratory environment will mean

that soon you'll be able to wander around the Louvre and the National Gallery as if you were really there – inspecting rooms as the curator intended, coming across new paintings by chance, walking up to pictures from a distance, and selecting from your own trash metal backing track.



The advent of a true three-dimensional experience is near.

Watch for other gimmicks as well: parties of chattering schoolchildren interrupting your view, tours led by umbrella-wielding guides, irritating background music. But just as this CD brings the Louvre one step closer to those who don't have the opportunity to go there, so a visit to Hampton Court or the Taj Mahal may soon be a matter of simply inserting another CD-ROM.

THE LOUVRE

Price £44.99

Contact BMG 0171 973 0011

Category

Platform MAC MPC CD-i 3DO

Steve Caplin



TITLES

THE ULTIMATE FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT: AMERICA'S ARCHITECT

A visual treat is in store for those wanting to understand the ideas behind these stunning buildings

Architecture is visual not textual and on this disc, video footage, computer technology and still photos are combined to superb effect.

There is a theory that visual artists shouldn't explain a philosophy because it only puts people off. Frank Lloyd Wright, one of the leading architects from the 20th Century and possibly America's finest, might have benefited some from hearing it. His stunning buildings certainly speak more eloquently than the man himself. Take this, for instance: "Now we are entitled to give the American citizen something more in his own image, in his own right - in his own proportions, too. Something that came out of the everywhere to which he belongs and into the here in which he lives. Now that's quality."

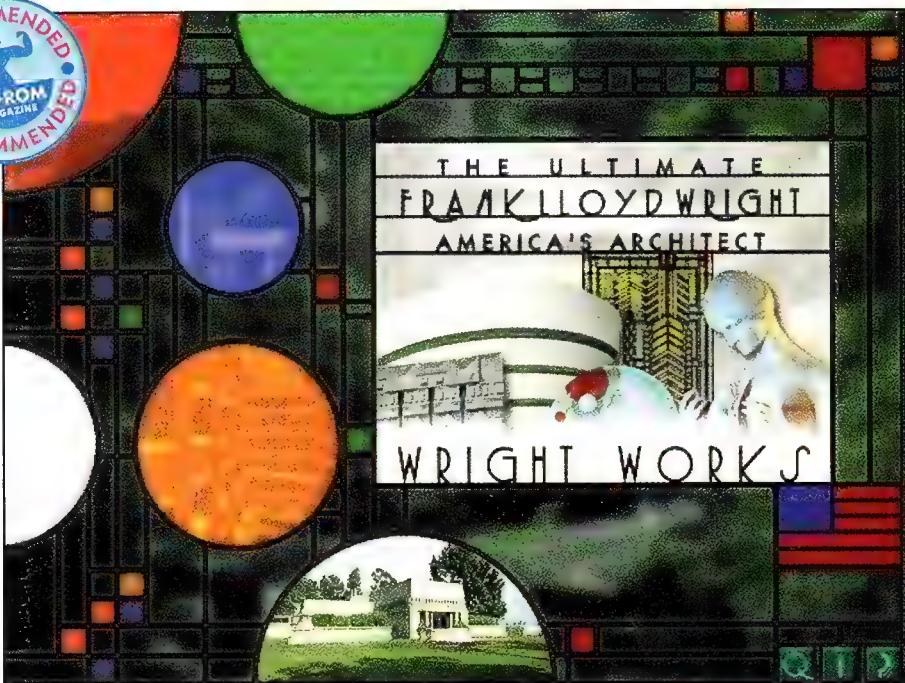
On Organic Architecture, Frank had this to say: "Organic means something that has entity. Only entity can live. So when you get that into a building you have got it into civilisation, and when you understand the nature of the term organic and the nature of nature study as I am advocating to you now, you have the centre of the civilisation that can preserve itself, that can persevere."

Fortunately, the fact that Lloyd Wright was less a speaker than a brilliant architect does not detract from the quality of this CD-ROM, which covers over 350 of his most important architectural contributions in an impressively interactive way.

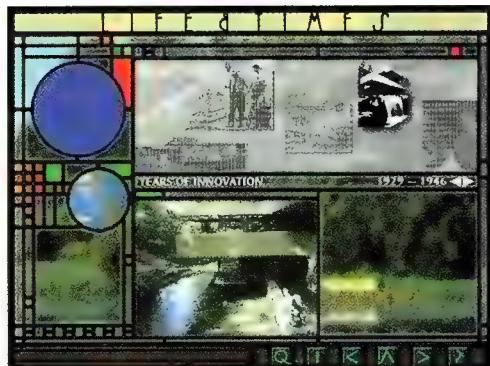
From the opening main menu, you can access six main areas of the disc, including a section which allows you to design and model your own piece of Organic Architecture, a guide to the structural elements Wright used in his work, and a section on his life and times.

The interface is based on Wright's Clooney Playhouse stained glass window from 1912, the whole disc reflecting the quality of Wright's design, with each screen intricately produced and well thought out throughout.

You can also explore Wright from any angle, which is where the real value of giving Wright the multimedia treatment comes in. The authors have devised the disc so that there is no fixed starting point and this gives you the



The opening menu provides a glimpse of the offerings in store.



There's no fixed starting point on this disc so you can explore as you would a Frank Wright building.



Fallingwater: a museum that can be analysed with musical metaphors.

flexibility to explore the disc as you would a Lloyd Wright building, with complete freedom. You can explore the disc linearly, or in a more structured method via the Structural Elements section which allows you to explore different facets of Wright's work, from the sites he chose to use, through patterns,

materials and building types. Some of these are a source of useful (or useless) information. Wright's beautiful Fallingwater House, for example, can be analysed with musical metaphors - the melody of the cantilevered terrace and the set of open stairs tripping note by note from one terrace to another. I mean, if you like this sort of thing, there's enough of it here.

A number of the sections and ideas on the disc are explored using video. As befitting a disc as well put together as this, these are not merely ganged in one section marked 'video' but are interspersed around the disc, in the places where they will do the most good.

Architectural reference is an ideal use of a CD-ROM disc and here,



You can explore Wright's past, through still images, video and computer flythroughs.

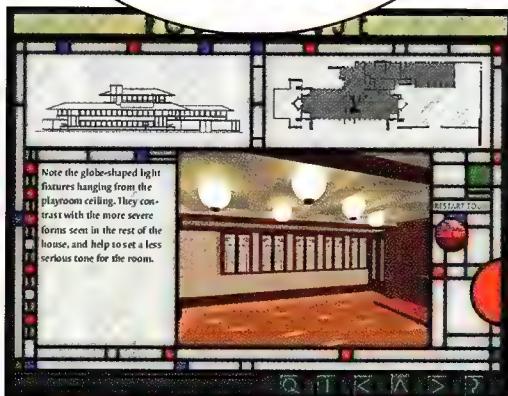
although grainy, the video is used to increase understanding of Wright's work. The voiceover is succinct and soothing, making you wish you were in sunny California being shown around the Ennis Brown House not in London on a rainy Sunday.

One of the best uses of the medium on the disc is the visual walkthroughs of the Robie House (1909) in Chicago. You can also wander around the Ennis Brown House in Los Angeles, and the Larkin Building. Walking through the buildings, you can decide for yourself whether to go forwards, left or right. Markers on accompanying plan and elevation views show you where you are in the building. These are excellent ways of letting you explore Wright's architecture vicariously and although the low resolutions of the graphics don't give you the full experience of a Wright building, the nature of Wright's architecture means that it is probably more suited to this visualisation than the likes of, say, Gaudi. It's a pity there aren't more of these. Particularly, I'd like to have a look around Fallingwater House, one of my favourite Wright buildings.

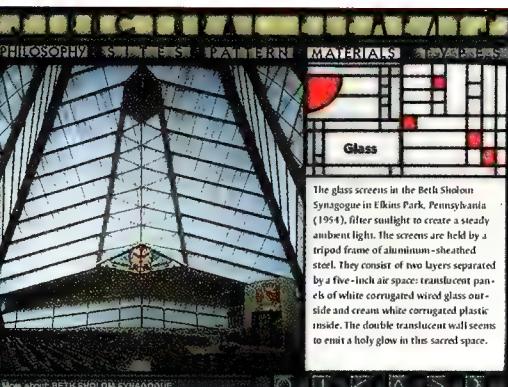
Another good use of the

medium – and one which could go further – is the ability, with the mini-CAD program included, to design your own Wright-inspired house using a series of blocks to create the initial shape and then adding windows, roofing, doors and so on. You can then create a low-resolution render of your efforts and thank yourself lucky that you didn't design your own house. Again, it's a pity there aren't more styles and better rendering, perhaps in full colour.

There are a few shortcomings with the disc. Even on a 33MHz 486 (the entry-level recommendation) the disc feels sluggish and, as usual, the video isn't really up to it. But the whole thing comes across as a seamless whole and as usual the content is up to the very high standards of existing Microsoft Home products.



Shining light on setting the scene for Robie House.



Wright used glass to create an ambient light.

THE ULTIMATE FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT: AMERICA'S ARCHITECT

Price under £45 (inc VAT)

Contact Microsoft

01734 270000

Category

Special requirements: 486/33 or higher

Platform MAC MPC CD-i 3DO

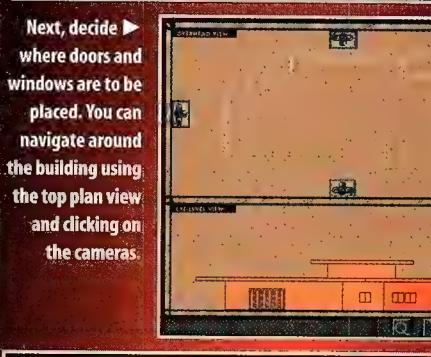


Stuart Price

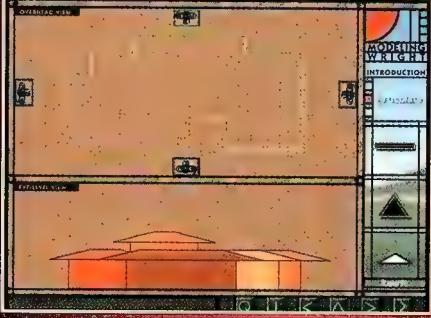
THE WRIGHT STUFF



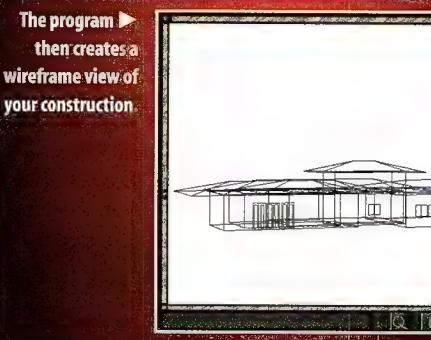
► The Modelling Wright section is a mini CAD program which lets you design your own Wright-inspired building. Select how you want the main blocks of the structure to interact.



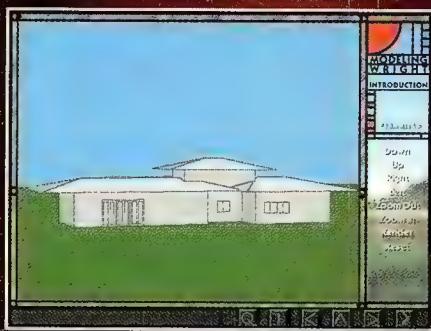
Next, decide where doors and windows are to be placed. You can navigate around the building using the top plan view and clicking on the cameras.



► Create a roofing style, and see the results in realtime.



The program then creates a wireframe view of your construction.



► When you are happy with the wireframe, you can create a low-resolution rendering of the building from the wireframe projection.



TITLES

How ANIMALS MOVE

As you may have worked out, this is a multimedia biology textbook devoted to animal locomotion in all its forms. But what sets this disc apart from run-of-the-mill biology titles is the way in which the information is presented.

Like many equivalent forward-thinking CD-ROMs, the information is presented in two different ways, and can be accessed passively through narrated guided tours or more interactively in a number of do-it-yourself reference sections.

Disappointingly, the guided tours are somewhat slothful, relying on interminable movies of animals slithering, crawling, running, jumping and flying from the left side of the screen to the right.

Happily, this is more than made up for by the excellent reference sections which is the key to one of the most intelligently put together reference discs I've ever encountered.

There are hyperlinks, of course. Three kinds in fact. The simplest, and, most familiar, is a star on a beige background that takes you to related references elsewhere on the disc. Clicking a highlighted word brings up the associated structure in a static diagram, explaining a muscle structure, say, while clicking on a dot on a beige background turns one of the many QuickTime movies used to show animal motion into a diagram showing the internal skeleton or the effect of drag on a moving body.

The disc is also packed with excellent incidental details. Many of the buttons are animated, so that holding the mouse over a picture of a horse, say, makes the horse get up and run. Not a very functional feature, admittedly, but one that definitely increases your desire to interact with the program.

What didn't work in our review version was the alphabetical index and the interactive experiments. In the experiments section you

should be able to experiment with the effect of different wing sizes on the body shape of a bird, or how much effort is required to jump a certain distance. But although these appeared to be a little dry – the output from each experiment seemed just to draw lines on a graph – they promise to add depth to students' understanding of animal motion, once they are properly

Walking and Running Arthropods



The drag force of the wind may blow an animal over, but the weight of the body stabilizes it.

For different-sized animals of the same shape, drag is proportional to surface area, and so to length squared; but weight is proportional to volume and so to length cubed.

An animal of half the length would be acted on by one quarter as much drag as the larger animal, but would have only one eighth as much weight to stabilize it, so would be more easily blown over.

Smaller animals have to place their feet

further out to the side, to counteract this effect.

This argument does not apply to insects with adhesive feet, standing on surfaces to which they can adhere (insects, adhesion of the feet

**This CD-ROM
encyclopaedia is
easy to read and
informative – and
very, very pastel.**

Spider



Contents
Arthropods
Footprints
Quadrupeds
Bites
Arthropods

The drag force of the wind may blow an animal over, but the weight of the body stabilizes it.

For different-sized animals of the same shape, drag is proportional to surface area, and so to length squared; but weight is proportional to volume and so to length cubed.

An animal of half the length would be acted on by one quarter as much drag as the larger animal, but would have only one eighth as much weight to stabilize it, so would be more easily blown over.

Smaller animals have to place their feet

further out to the side, to counteract this effect.

Zoom in for a close-up of one of mankind's most feared animals – the relatively innocuous spider.

David Attenborough himself would find it difficult to find fault with the quality and presentation of this multimedia CD-ROM

implemented.

Some of the existing features also leave a little to be desired. The highlight colour is beige on a light beige background. On a dirty monitor, and mine's filthy, this can make hypertext links a little difficult to spot. And the disc does not currently appear to be searchable,

which is a major omission in an academic CD-ROM, although this may well be fixed in the final version. The table of contents and navigation icons are excellent, so you could probably find what you were looking for with just a few clicks anyway, but a central keyword search engine would make the reference element much easier to use.

For different-sized animals of the same shape, drag is proportional to surface area, and so to length squared; but weight is proportional to volume and so to length cubed.

An animal of half the length would be acted on by one quarter as much drag as the larger animal, but would have only one eighth as much weight to stabilize it, so would be more easily blown over.

Smaller animals have to place their feet

is a fairly hardcore educational CD-ROM, ideal for sitting on a classroom PC or Mac for the more inquisitive teenager to explore, but not really intended for the home. However, the quality of the content and the presentation put this disc in the David Attenborough class. And provided the missing features work as advertised in the final version, I would imagine this should become a staple of the educational CD-ROM sector.

How Animals Move

HOW ANIMALS MOVE

Price £TBA

Contact Discovery Channel

0101 301 986 0444

Category

Platform MAC MPC CD-i 3DO



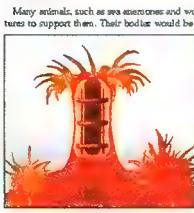
Jim Smith



You can follow the tour of the exhibits or click on the appropriate button and be catapulted into the encyclopaedia.

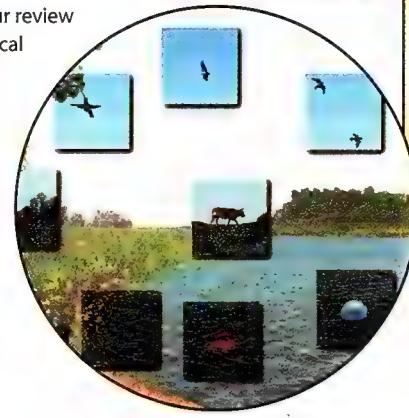
The Machinery of Movement

Hydrostats



Clicking on buttons within the text turns the QuickTime movie into a diagram – here, the sea anemone.

should be able to experiment with the effect of different wing sizes on the body shape of a bird, or how much effort is required to jump a certain distance. But although these appeared to be a little dry – the output from each experiment seemed just to draw lines on a graph – they promise to add depth to students' understanding of animal motion, once they are properly





The main menu: take a trip to angel paradise, dude.

ANGELS

Do they exist? Can they heal? Do they really need wings? And why do they all seem to shop at Laura Ashley?

Complain about evil spirits in Papua New Guinea and you will probably receive a sympathetic nod and the address of the local witch finder

Do the same in Hemel Hempstead and you're an immediate candidate for care in the community.

As this CD-ROM makes abundantly clear, the perception of madness, and a whole lot of other unexplained phenomena, is cultural. Here, when people retell their experiences of meeting angels, being healed by them or being taken to meet God (it's a he, by the way, with a beard and gown), you cannot help noticing how normal they appear.

Unlike UFO abductees, the many subjects of this disc are neither spooky, spooked nor mad.

Of course, the USA (where this CD-ROM comes from) is a vehemently Christian society. And if you believe, as most Americans do, that angels are real, have bodies and can be called down from heaven to help us, then it is only natural that people are going to meet them.

There has been a huge resurgence of interest in the subject of angels in the US in recent years, and to a lesser extent here. Somewhat disturbingly it seems to be caused by seepage from the Last Days mentality of fundamentalist Christians: that Doomsday is imminent and that we will see the Book of Revelations come horrifyingly true.

Although most of this disc is devoted to the good side of angels, the portion that is devoted to dark angels – or devils – contains testimony from a New York priest who says he is seeing an exponential growth in the number of possessions and exorcisms in his city. Thirty years ago there were none, now there are more than 200 a year.

If the Rapture is coming, then it is not surprising



The Mysterious Messengers calls up a wide variety of unbiased sources.



Choose from a bewildering array of tack with this on-line catalogue of angel goodies.



Tra la la: it's Angel pick-'n'-mix where you click on a picture and find out what quality the angel represents.

Devils were angels once. About a third followed Lucifer to hell.

that we should see an upsurge in the divine as well as the evil: hence the rise in the number of angels, and, bizarrely, angel shops. This disc is a complete resource to angelism. There are histories of angels, angels in art (quite a lot of kitsch Victorian

dead children here), angels in films, angels in songs and a complete listing of angel gift shops in the USA, Mexico and Canada. I scrolled through this section to see how long it was. Awesomely so, was the answer. And if you're too lazy to drive to your nearest angel emporium, there is an interactive mail-order catalogue for you to peruse.

This is one of the most interesting, well made, imaginative CD-ROMs I have yet come across. The research is impeccable. Every topic is linked to others by marvellously designed (if slightly camp) icons, and most topics contain a round table discussion between angel experts. Click on one of the experts (ranging from bishops and priests

to New Age seers – although no Satanists to balance the debate) and they explain such vital questions as "Do angels have wings?" or "Why do they always play musical instruments?" or, more substantially, "Do they have the power to heal?"

Of course, it's all hogwash. At least that's this agnostic's view. And I suspect even a true believer might

find this disc's angel propaganda a little too much to swallow.

Nevertheless, other CD-ROM developers could do with getting hold of this, just to see how well this type of thing can be done. Stop sniggering at the back.



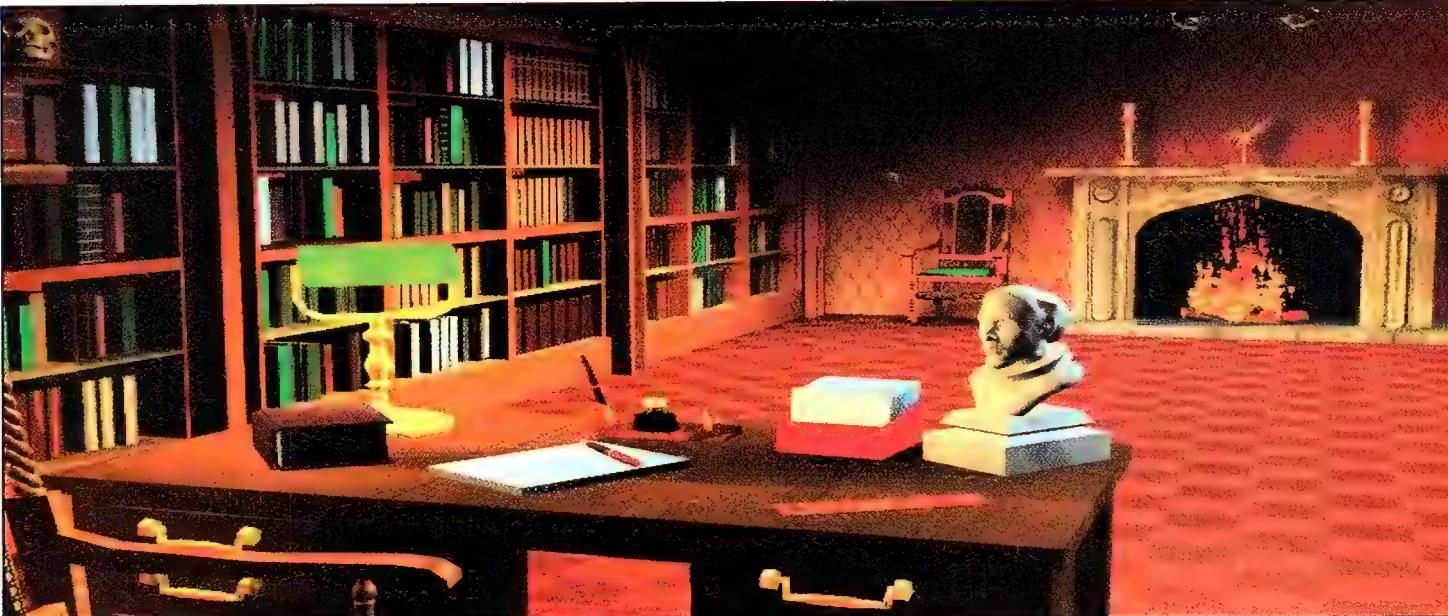
One in ten pop songs have the word 'angel' in them.

ANGELS
Price \$59.98
Contact Live Interactive
0101-818 988 5050
Category Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DO



Jim Smith

TITLES



WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: THE COMPLETE WORKS ON CD-ROM

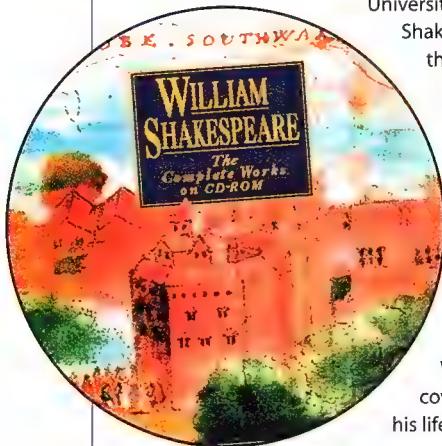
From schoolkids to serious Shakespeare academics, there's more info on this CD than you could waggle a sharp stick at, methinks

After a brief glimpse of the outside of the Globe theatre, we find ourselves in a study. Walls are lined with books, a fire is flickering in the hearth, and on top of the desk is a bust of the Bard, a book, a card index, a pen and pad, and a bookmark. But you won't find a body on the floor or a treasure map hidden in one of the drawers (though there is a skull on the bookshelf). This is no adventure game, but Andromeda Interactive's latest CD-ROM publishing venture – William Shakespeare: The Complete Works.

Neither is this a shovelling together of long forgotten Victorian editions of Shakespeare's dramas and poems. Andromeda's disc contains the very highly regarded Wells and Taylor compact edition of *The Complete Works*, published by Oxford University Press in 1986. Some of the finest

Shakespearean scholars went back to the original documents, re-examined every detail of the text, including the stage directions, and modernised spelling and punctuation to produce what must be the definitive edition of our times, bringing the modern reader closer than ever before to the plays as they were originally performed.

The CD-ROM includes Stanley Wells' excellent introductory essays covering Shakespeare's achievement, his life and career, the Elizabethan theatre,



As You Like It Act 2 Scene 7*

File Edit Font Go Search

Jaques

140 All the world's a stage,
141 And all the men and women merely players.
142 They have their exits and their entrances,
143 And one man in his time plays many parts,
144 His acts being seven ages. At first the infant,
145 Mewling and puking in the nurse's arms.
146 Then the whining schoolboy with his satchel
147 And shining morning face, creeping like snail
148 Unwillingly to school. And then the lover,
149 Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad
150 Made to his mistress' eyes.
151 Full of strange oaths,
152 Jealous in honour, sudden quarrels,
153 Seeking the bubble reputation,
154 Even in the cannon's mouth, to prove his worthiness
In fair round belly wit and wanton Will.

144 Mewling: crying (a cat is said to "mew").
149 Puking: vomiting.
149 Made to: on the subject of, and dedicated to.

Select all Copy Cancel

Line 169 Col 7

The famous "All the world's a stage" speech from As You Like It. Lines indicated by a red number have text boxes explaining meaning and usage.

the printing history of early editions and the modern editor's task. There are also his brief introductions to each work.

Twelve of the best known plays, including *Hamlet*, *Julius Caesar*, *Macbeth*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *King Lear* and *Othello*, come with extra detailed material taken from the *Oxford School Shakespeare Edition*, edited by Roma Gill. There are extended introductory essays, commentaries on the plot of each scene, notes on the leading characters and on Shakespeare's use of verse, and fragments of criticism by eminent men of letters such as Dr Johnson, Lamb, Coleridge, Hazlitt and Bradley.



Click on the bookshelves in the study and a book glides out and opens to reveal a list of all the plays and poems. Pick a scene or poem, and the text is displayed in very clear, large type in a window of its own. But although many of the capabilities of a word processor are present, such as printing, saving, copying and changing the font, you can't search for a word within the chosen text, although you can search through the canon as a whole.

There is also one rather unique feature. Double-clicking on a word in the text finds all its other occurrences throughout the canon. For example, one of Caesar's final words, "brute" leads to a list that includes both *Henry VI Part 3* and *Hamlet*. Selecting the former leads to a line spoken by King Edward in Act 5 Scene 1: "Et tu, Brute – wilt thou stab Caesar too?"

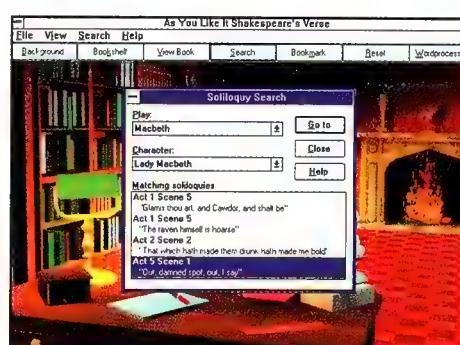
Of more value to a wider audience are the detailed line-by-line notes from the 12 Oxford School Shakespeare Edition plays, clarifying difficult words or phrases. Clicking on a line-number in the text window, immediately displays any appropriate note at the bottom-right of the window. However, as you scroll through the text, the notes don't follow you. In the printed version, pages are divided into two columns with text and notes appearing side by side. A similar approach might have been more useful here than the system actually adopted.

Back in the study, the artefacts on the desk bring up a number of other functions. Click on the bust and you can click through Wells' excellent background essays. The pen and pad lead to an integral word processor, with which you can produce your own essays complete with selected quotations that you've pasted in. There's also a glossary of words from the plays and poems that are no longer in current use or that have a different contemporary meaning.

The index box takes you to the Search menu. As well as being able to conduct simple or more complex Boolean searches throughout the text as a whole, several really useful specialist search routines have been included. You can look for certain types of plays (for example, the Histories), or for works written during a particular period (for example, before 1590). You can search for scenes set in given locations or including particular characters, and you can seek out songs or soliloquies from particular plays or performed by particular characters.

Except for the splash screen with the Globe Theatre and the virtual study, there are no pictures. Neither are there sound or video clips. It's a pity that there is no diagram of the Elizabethan theatre, no portrait of Shakespeare himself, no pictures of famous thespians in some of the great roles and no photos of famous productions. A shame also that Andromeda couldn't negotiate to include short extracts from some of the wonderful recordings of the plays.

Nevertheless, this CD-ROM is a good reference work – a thoroughly worthy production that contains a vast amount of truly useful material to complement what is almost certainly the finest Shakespeare edition available.



Lady Macbeth's soliloquy caught red-handed.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: THE COMPLETE WORKS ON CD-ROM

Price £34.99 (inc. VAT)

Contact Andromeda

Interactive 01235 529595

Category Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DO



Frank Kriwaczek

THE ULTIMATE TRIVIA CD



Trivia it is, fun it is, ultimate it's not. But it has a sense of humour, so whatthehell

Trigraphy is an art form as old as painting and sculpture, it's just that our forebears didn't package them in boxes to sell at WH Smith for £29.95. Having a command of interesting but useless facts is as much a life skill as cooking or ironing, and this CD-ROM sets out to exploit the modern fixation with a passion.

The interface is somewhat crude. You can't install this thing on your Windows desktop, it has to be run with the "Run..." command. We couldn't get it to run under DOS, and certainly not using the instructions, which are a bit half-hearted to say the least.

There are only two screens for the main part of the game: one for choosing the category and another where you answer them. Primitive though this may be, it does work, and reasonably quickly so you can get on with the game. The questions are mostly quite challenging, and fun to solve. They come in the familiar multiple choice format (when will somebody invent a decent text parser?), where you get a choice of three topics on each round, all of which are different unlike pub trivia games.

There are the usual stalwarts such as famous people, wildlife and the movies. World sport is included, but only in Amerocentric form. Sound effects is a particularly hard category and quotes is absolutely weird – not least because they're read by a

Canadian who has become somewhat weary with life. The two hardest are relationships, and art and antiques. The latter asks you to price an item: for example, is this Louis XIV chair worth \$35,000,

\$48,000 or \$53,000? There are five choices to each so if you get more than 20 percent, you're probably already working for Sotheby's.

Relationships is similarly difficult, using a set of questions taken from surveys, to which you have to guess the most popular answer à la *Family Fortunes*. This is impossible, but fun.

There are the usual bonus questions, time-traps and a prize for anybody making 10,000 points or more. There is also a wicked sense of humour in evidence. Anybody who can ask: "Who is the quintessential French actor who starred in *Gigi*?" and list Debussy and Jean-Claude Van Damme as alternatives to Chevalier, can't be all bad.

Most of the media elements work okay, with the exception of the Video for Windows files. The questions are good, but are let down by the tone of the neighbourhood. I can't not recommend this, as I did enjoy it. I just wish I had enjoyed it more.



Jim Smith

THE ULTIMATE TRIVIA CD

Price £18.32 (inc. VAT)

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Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DO



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TITLES

A man wearing a colander urinates on a flower (detail).



Isn't this car a bit out of focus? On this disc you can experiment with settings and shutter speeds.

UNDERSTANDING EXPOSURE

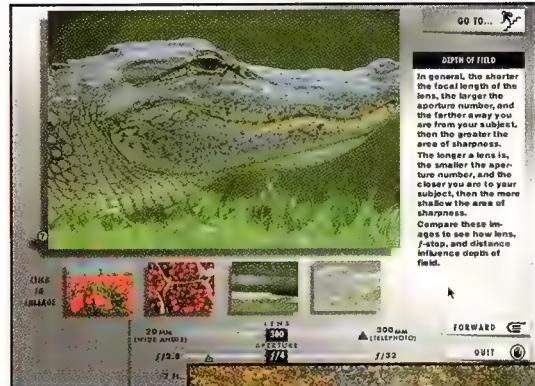
With the hints and tips on this disc there'll be no need to write to the Beeb's *How Do They Do That?*

Brian Peterson is a professional photographer who specialises in photography using *available light* – the best kind in my opinion. He's written three books on the subject, as well as magazine articles and now he's produced a disc which deals with exposure in such terms as the interdependency of aperture, shutter speed and film speed, and uses his own photographs to illustrate his theories.

In the Interactive Theatre Peterson offers a structured approach to learning the subject. He starts from the basics by explaining exactly what an F-stop is, and goes on from there. The Theatre subdivides into three main areas: the Photographic Triangle (the relationship between aperture, shutter speed and film speed); the Quality of Light (the principles of light including colour, angle and direction); and Special Techniques, where Peterson shows examples of some of the tricks that he himself uses with problematic shots.

The Workshop allows you to customise your own lessons, by selecting a particular area of interest from the Theatre section and looking at Principles (the science behind the topic); Techniques, (how to tips); and Examples (photographs supporting the principle or technique). Each area is further subdivided by snappy subtitles which might or might not evoke the item you're looking for.

Photolab is the interactive part of the disc, allowing you to experiment with photographs by altering the aperture settings, the exposure time and



Compare and contrast varying depths of field the easy way.



A photograph of how he took a photograph. I wish I knew how he took this one.

film speed. As you do so, the photograph on screen is replaced by the one that you'd see if you'd used that particular variation. The elements are interconnected, and it would have been helpful to be able to fiddle with all three variables on the same photographs at the same time. A logistical nightmare for Peterson and whoever compiles the disc, of course, but that's why we pay for these things.

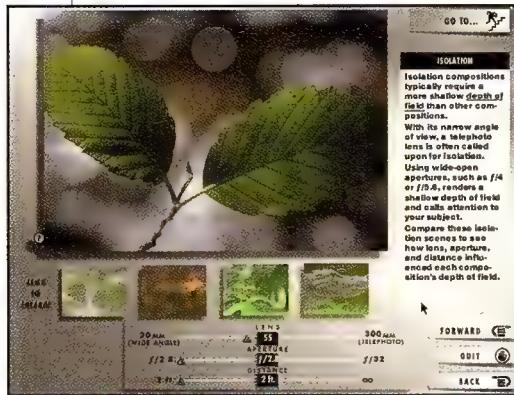
There are many little tips throughout the disc, including how to get correct light readings in high contrast situations, or how to get a broad depth of field with a shot requiring a telephoto lens.

The multimedia

elements mainly involve the inclusion of sound buttons on occasional pictures, allowing Peterson to explain why he took it, problems, what he feels about it or how he set it up. Additional photographs have been used to demonstrate some points, and there's even a short QuickTime movie with the man himself explaining about the disc.

Generally, there's good attention to detail here, the photographs look professional, the theories are explained well and the tips useful.

The Photolab is a good idea, although it could have been better developed (ouch!) and the disc is an interesting alternative to those soft porn photography magazines you usually find on newsagents' shelves.



A leaf in isolation. With another leaf.

UNDERSTANDING EXPOSURE

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Category

Platform MAC MPC CD-i 3D

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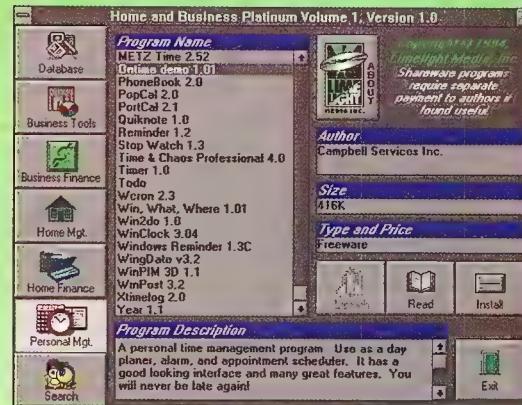
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TITLES



Lion on a spring? Shit, I thought you said I got a part in Lion King...



In the clown's caravan you can have a close encounter... with the Avon Lady.

THE CIRCUS

If you're a kid itching to learn – or a cynical adult who thinks the education system is a bit of a three-ringer – this is the disc for you



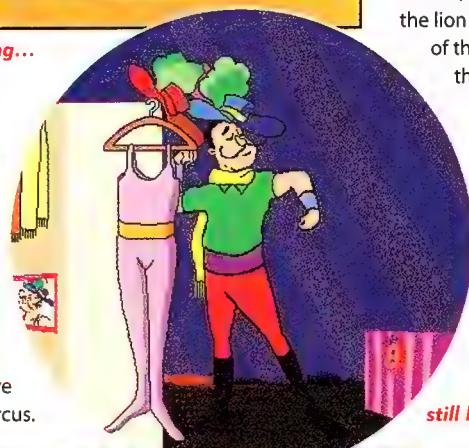
As the name suggests, this disc is an interactive CD-ROM based around the metaphor of a circus.

The package splits into two main parts – a kind of wander-about, living pages bit, and the circus acts themselves. Today's Show is the circus proper; the acts featured are shown around the side of the screen. Moving the spotlight/cursor over each character brings up a short animated example of their act, giving an idea of the task you can perform interactively with them.

For example, the magician traps a character inside a pile of tubular containers of different colours; you must memorise the order in which they're stacked, then they're scattered on the ground. Using the parrot,

who flies over to collect each container, you go about replacing them in order. Stack them in the correct order and the character emerges; do it incorrectly and you're given a second chance – each container can be opened to see which section of the character's body is inside.

The human cannonball act involves firing the smallest clown at the trapeze to catch a parrot, who's annoying the crowd with her terrible singing (her sadly curtailed version of 'La



Men in tights can still look butch.

The music tent

lets you "play" various instruments: the guitar has many effects; the trombone fewer; most are percussive instruments that just play away on their own when selected. The juke box is worth using, if only because it contains the full version of 'La Cucaracha'; which really has to be heard at maximum volume to be fully appreciated. The other tunes are more conventional, circus numbers.

In the clown's caravan you can design your own clown face by incorporating a multitude of elements until you find a combination to scare

the hardiest child to death. You can also have a bit of a mess about in his caravan. The magician's tent is another thing entirely, and probably won't be appreciated by anyone who didn't live through the '60s.

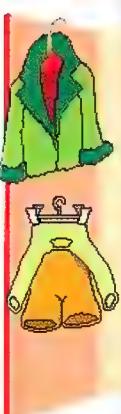
The animation throughout is excellent and the dialogue is entertaining and there's plenty to do. Like most good packages, the action is enough to keep younger children interested, and there are even sections which will help them with their counting. As well as all this, the game's manual comes with a few pages in the middle which contain a couple of pictures to colour, a page of join-the-dots and a simple puzzle. A nice touch.



Today's Show is the circus proper, with all the act around the side of the screen. Scroll up, scroll up?

THE CIRCUS
Price £39.99 (inc VAT)
Contact Koch Media
01252 714 340
Category
Platform MAC MPC CD-i 3DO

Jim Smith





EXPLORAPEDIA: THE WORLD OF NATURE

No, it's not Peter Gabriel singing about smelly feet, but a kids' interactive encyclopaedia from Microsoft. Honest!

W

e forgave Scooby Doo and those meddling kids for having American accents because we were entertained by them – we should do likewise with Explorapedia: The World of Nature. Hosted by Thaddeus "You can call me Tad" Pole, we're placed on the good ship Information from where we can view an Earth just begging for an eager mind to explore it.

The Explorapedia divides our planet into 16 environments, or 'biomes', including rain forests, deserts, mountains and even the Universe itself. Tad immediately starts earning his keep by asking us what we want to do, and presents a choice of seven options including, 'hear about Explorapedia' and 'explore'. With these choices the CD caters for those who like to know exactly what's on offer and how to get at it, while placing equal importance on exploration and discovery. Encouraged by the fact that help from Tad is only a click away, the more intrepid will not be left out in the cold.

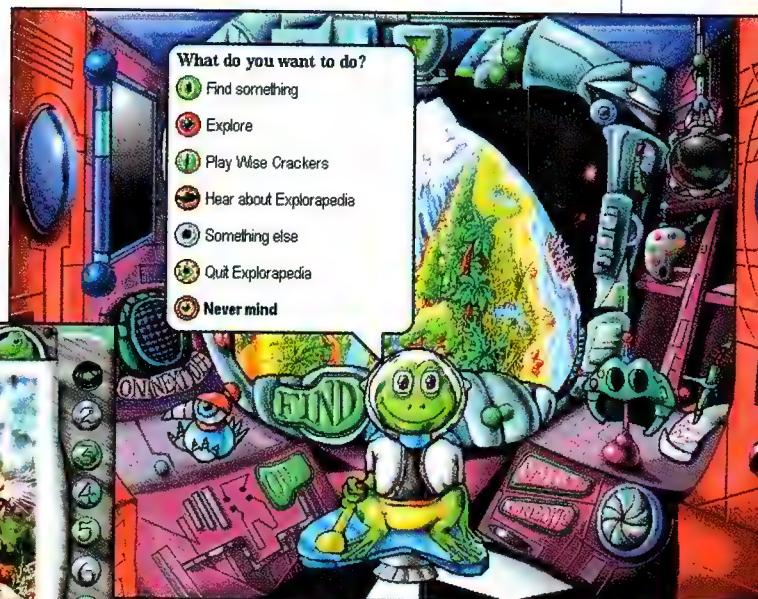
To explore, you can either click on one of Earth's environments which will beam you directly into that biome, or choose one from a menu. A sprog's voice reads the on-screen text out for you, but if kids want to practise their reading skills there's an on-screen option to switch off the sound. Certain words within the text are either coloured or underlined. Coloured words, if clicked, will lead to more information or a related subject; underlined words will give a definition. It's quite easy to get lost in the labyrinth of information and so the interface includes a partial parachute in the shape of a 'step-back' button and, of course, there's always Tad if you get seriously bamboozled.

Back on the ship there are plenty of things to keep activity levels running high. Some of the objects are just fun animations. Others, like

'find', will patch you into the comprehensive database which allows you to trawl for text clips, pictures and a sizeable resource of video. If you've seen something that inspires a bout of creativity, clicking on the paint palette will link you to your favourite drawing or writing program. If you



Exhibits have their own hotlinked, narrated text entry. Which is great, except this isn't a Siberian Tiger!



The little green guy is Thaddeus Pole, or Tad for short – your guide through Explorapedia.

fancy testing your exploration skills, click on Wise Cracker – the ship's parrot – and it'll challenge you to search for five pieces of information. Once they've all been collected the reward is a corny animation – which is a bit of a let-down. The radio plays songs, not up

to the Muppet standard, but tolerable nonetheless.

Explorapedia also encourages non-computer activities (whatever next?). For example, find and read about the hare and the hyrax, then list the differences between them and their environments on a piece of paper (paper?).

In production terms,



There are simple general knowledge games for kids with serious attention span disorder.

this CD-ROM is of the highest quality. The hefty database is hidden so well by the clear animation and graphics that the disc earns its rightful place within the infotainment bracket. Although getting lost with this type of CD-ROM is easy, even with the best of help. Explorapedia is no exception and Microsoft has room for improvement in this department – which hopefully we'll see in future discs in the series.

Finally, American multimedia software inevitably means American accents, a fact that continues to grate on parents buying CD-ROM home products. Although, fortunately for companies like Microsoft, these niggles don't seem to upset young CD-ROM users, for whom the Yankee accent is part of their everyday cultural diet.

EXPLORAPEDIA: THE WORLD OF NATURE

Price \$34.95

Contact Microsoft

001 206 882 8080

Category

Platform MAC MPC CD-I 3DO



Tessa Paine



Tad is always a good source of fresh ways to explore the wealth of information on this disc.

Titles MARIO LAND M

MARIO TEACHES SUMS

**With Mario in
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you can count on
mathematical
merriment**

Maths is one of those subjects that kids absolutely loathe, potentially a huge problem since numeracy is an essential skill for later life. If you can get your child interested in the subject early then the battle is half won. This is exactly where *Mario Teaches Sums* comes in. Aimed at three- to six-year-olds, the product is designed to introduce youngsters to numbers and counting, in a vivid three-dimen-

Vibrant colourful graphics combine with catchy music and cute animations to make discovering the world of numbers an entertaining and intuitive experience, with Mario guiding us effortlessly. Each of the nine worlds (Numbers, Counting, Comparing, Pattern, Sorting, Shape, How Many,



**With nine worlds to visit,
there's more than enough
to keep kids occupied.**



Count to ten with dodgy looking geezers.

support speech) a description of the item. In the latter mode, the child can wake Luigi and help him to perform a task by listening to the speech prompts, for example, building a train out of the various shapes in Shape World.

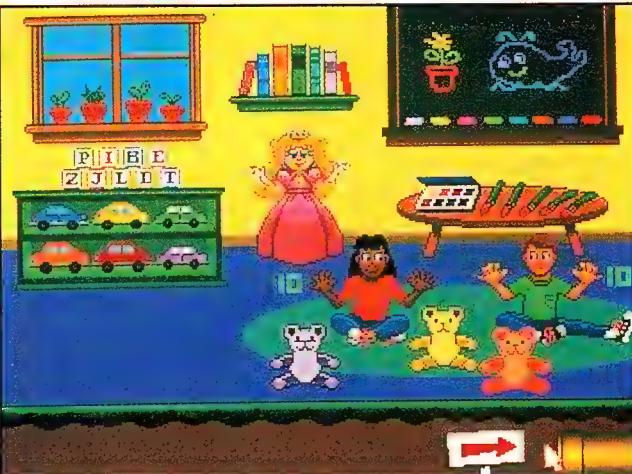
The digitised speech is difficult to understand at times, particularly in Song World, but that aside it is hard to fault this product. Moving around the worlds couldn't be simpler, just point and click.

There is also the option to display text on-screen, and to turn off the music, sound effects and randomised objects in each scene (a neat touch for children who prefer order and continuity). It comes with a clear, concise manual which outlines exactly how to use the program as a home teaching aid or as part of the National Curriculum. Consequently, it achieves, and deserves, a near perfect score!



Teresa Maughan

MARIO TEACHES SUMS
Price £24.99 (inc VAT)
CD and disk versions
Contact Mindscape
01444 246333
Category    
Platform MAC MPC CD-i 3DO



Hands up those who have ten fingers and thumbs. Not you, teddy!

MARIO'S PLAYSCHOOL

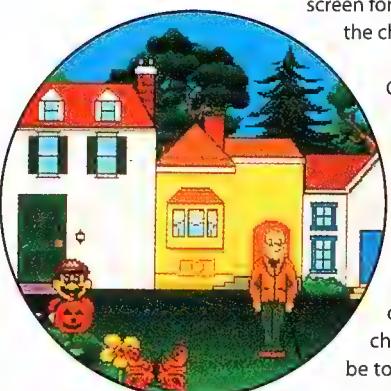
Brilliant graphics and realistic sound effects provide early learning fun for little ones

Combine *Playdays*, *Tots TV* and *Super Mario Brothers* and you've got a fair idea of what Mario's Playschool is about. Mindscape has developed this title in the series with the toddler in mind, combining entertainment with education to produce an interactive game designed to develop pre-school skills in English and Maths.

Like other titles in the series, there are a number of worlds to explore (some Fun and some Discovery/Learning worlds). And though the manual that comes with this package only covers seven worlds, namely Body, Sing Song, Colour, Counting, Listening, Opposite and Shape, there are actually eight on the CD which also features Time World.

Counting Fun World introduces the child to numbers and counting by depicting a scene from Mario's kitchen or bedroom full of collections of objects to count. Opposite World, on the other hand, has Discovery/Learning modes, the first enabling the child to explore what's on the

the screen for themselves, and the second having the child responding to Luigi's prompts.



Characters pop up to help when things get difficult.

Mario acts as both tutor and guide. Graphics are even bigger and bolder than in the other products in the series. The sound effects are very realistic – check out the frog in Listening World – and most importantly, children are encouraged with various phrases and animated helpers who pop up on-screen when difficulties arise. If a child does make a mistake, they won't be told they are wrong, but prompted again and the number of choices reduced. This is an impressive feature in a well thought out package that will keep younger

package that will keep younger children entertained for hours while teaching them a thing or two into the bargain!



Teresa Maughan



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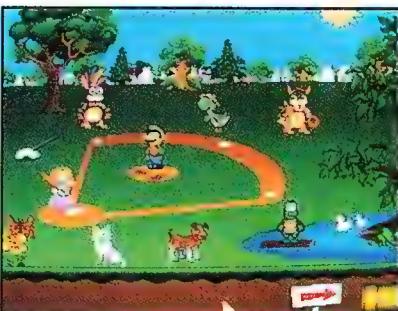
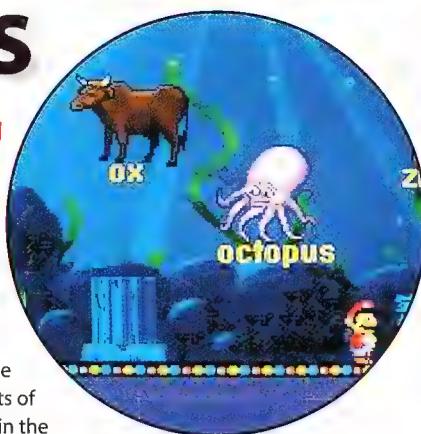
MARIO TEACHES WORDS

Mario makes learning language as easy as A, B, C!

Mario Teaches Words is designed to provide your child with the basic language skills covered in English Level One as set out in the National Curriculum. The contents of the package, like the other titles in the Mario series, are scattered across a number of different worlds and cover a range of topics including letters, sounds, vowels, blending, sentences, first and last letters, stories and singalongs.

Using a combination of brightly coloured graphics, simple animation and speech, Mario and Luigi guide the early language learner through basic reading and writing skills.

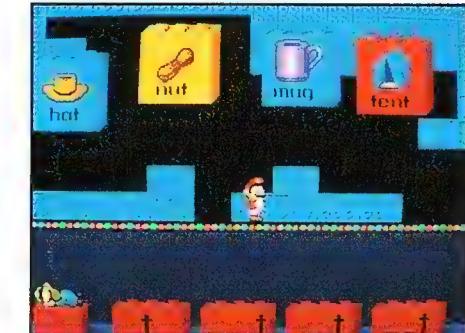
*O-o-o, don't tell me,
I know this one...*



Meet Mario's motley crew!

Of the nine worlds on the CD-ROM, six use the Discovery/Learning method of exploring, while three Fun Worlds explore concepts simply through listening. In Vowel World, for example, your child can choose to click on four objects, three of which begin with the same vowel and one with a consonant, and hear pronunciations of the selected word and its vowel sound. In Learning mode, they are directed by Luigi to respond to specific requests – a correct response earns both praise and a visit from the Fun friends on hand throughout.

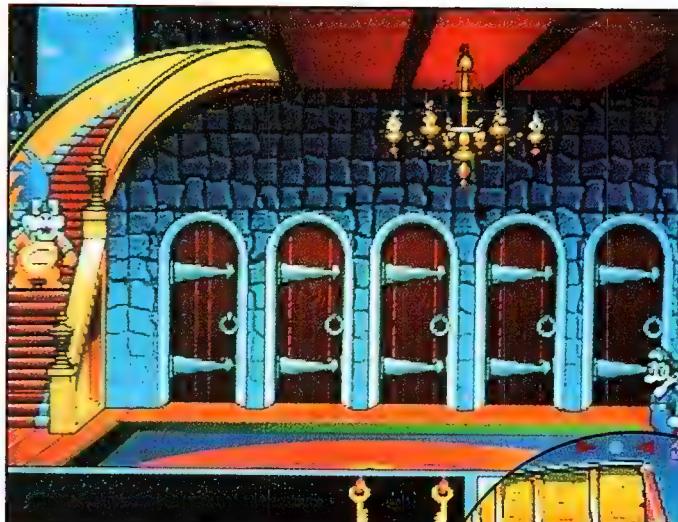
Given the high level of interaction, it seems a bit of a shame that you can't input your child's name and have the verbal responses personalised to make an excellent package even better. Still, you can't have everything!



Match objects with the right initial letter.

MARIO TEACHES WORDS
Price £24.99 (inc VAT)
CD and disk versions
Contact Mindscape
01444 246333
Category
Platform MAC MPC CD-I 3DO

Teresa Maughan



Pick a portal and start Luigi's world tour!

MARIO IS MISSING!

Go globe-trotting with Luigi in his search for the abducted Mario and learn about the world of geography



*Take That
bring the house
down at the
Coliseum in
Rome.*

Targeted at children aged seven right up to adults, Mario is Missing! purports to "develop your child's awareness and understanding of world geography through a challenging, stimulating interactive action adventure."

Your mission as Luigi is to find Mario who has been carted off to a secret location by the evil Bowser. To do this Luigi must enter one of

five portals in Bowser's castle, each of which transports him to a mystery city. Once there, your job is to discern your whereabouts, defeat Bowser's hench turtles and return a number of precious artefacts to their proper landmarks.

However, there seems to be too much time spent roving around the rather basic map and not enough of the game

requires you to learn about the various countries and cities. Seven-year-olds are likely to get so wrapped up in the gameplay, that they don't assimilate the geographical information. While for older kids and adults, the package just doesn't contain enough hard facts.

The map of the world where you can zoom in on countries and cities is excellent, but the landmarks and artefacts would have been much better if they had been real photographic images.

In short, a great idea realised in a merely average product.



Isn't seven a bit young to be monitoring M25 traffic?



Teresa Maughan



TITLES

ANNA TOMMY

Take a fantastic voyage around the human body sidestepping American humour along the way

The premise of *AnnaTommy - An Adventure Into The Human Body* - is that Anna and Tommy (two odious American children) have demonstrated a prodigious interest in anatomy for which they get 'rewarded' by being miniaturised into a little ship and à la *Fantastic Voyage* packed off for a good nose about in someone else's insides.

On their journey, they are accompanied by a self-proclaimed zany computer, and all three take every opportunity to indulge themselves in humorous asides. As you can probably gather from the finely-honed wordplay in the title, it's belly laughs all the way.

Unwelcome though many of these jokes are, they are nowhere near as unsettling as the PA-style announcements that accompany our heroes' approach to a new area of the body: "Attention... approaching testes..." booms the computer. I suppose it's nice to be warned.

While bobbing about, the kids are either quizzed on the purpose of their current location, or have to perform certain tasks that help the body to function effectively.

These tasks take the form of bizarrely-adapted computer games from the early '80s. In the kidneys, in a weird version of Breakout, they have to use their ship to bounce pill-shaped nutrients back into the body while allowing the nasty brown waste products to leave. If you think that's mind-bending, wait for the testes, where our heroes are called upon to play a game of Asteroids inside a gigantic testicle, in order to decoagulate a lumpy sperm. These tasks and quizzes can either be selected by navigating around the body internally, or by clicking on them from a diagram of the body and selecting the various systems - skeletal, circulatory, lymphatic, or whatever; a completed section prompts irritating hand slapping and cries of "Good jaahhb". And that's about it.

Does a game of Asteroids in a testicle teach reproduction?



Stand up and be counted: take a visit to the sperm production factory - the testes.



No, it's not a scene from Alien. Prepare to be injected into this body for a good nose about his insides.



Steady how you go: jetting about in someone else's body does no harm if you have catalytic converters fitted.

You might be forgiven for thinking I think this product is entirely useless, but that's not quite true. This disc at least attempts to be entertaining about a subject that might otherwise have come across as dry as a bone. The idea of bolting on games and 'jokes' to educational content is a good one. And there is a good deal of solid educational content here. There is also a high degree of enthusiasm. Everyone involved certainly seems very enthusiastic about internal tubing. "The reproductive system is a pretty intense place!" for example. The trouble is, you don't get the feeling that their enthusiasm will translate to the kids. Perhaps this is because the games are not very good, and not particularly well linked to the content; the kidney blasting game, for example, teaches you nothing about the way kidneys work, which is a real wasted opportunity.

Meanwhile, the jokes are lame and very American.

Unlike most so-called 'edutainment' products, this one has a fair amount of 'edu'. Unfortunately, there's not much in the way of compelling 'tainment' to go with it.

Patrick McCarthy





...chortle as you dump tonnes of dirt, gravel and stones over another hard worker...

buttons (left, right and action). You're positively encouraged to do the wrong thing — mainly because if you just did the proper tasks you'd finish the whole thing in about ten minutes.

The false directions are intended to provide much humorous by-play with the zany cast of characters.

Laugh aloud as you swing the wrecking ball through an overhead power-cable; chortle to your boots as you steamroller over somebody's boxer shorts; choke on your fizzy pop as you hit someone on the head with a wrecking ball, scoop them up with your excavator and drop them into a hole...

I looked in vain for a chance to climb some scaffolding and shout irritating comments at people whose dress sense was incompatible with mine, but you can't have everything.

Surprisingly for a CD-ROM kids title, the majority of the 'interactive' action is video based. The lack of Windows support ensures a bigger than usual film area (about two-thirds of screen-size), and the picture quality isn't bad. But the interactivity is dubious to say the least - it's just all so pointless - and the manic obsession with lumps of yellow machinery is frankly bizarre. "Hey kiddo! The steamroller weighs over ten tons!... That's five elephants, plus four little elephants... Imagine if you ran over a snail with that baby!" says the woman, at one point. Weird.

The weirdest thing is that apparently there's another CD-ROM released in the USA with the same theme. I say weird, because most parents spend their

time telling their children not to play on construction sites - and now here's something that tries to show what good fun you can have on one. Amazingly for an American product, there aren't any disclaimers along the lines of do-not-try-this-sort-of-stuff-at-home, Kiddo.

Coming soon: Live-Rail Jumping and Abandoned Quarry.

Patrick McCarthy



Laugh aloud as you chuck a worker into a 20ft pit...

KIDS ON SITE

Is it really a good idea to let children discover the joys of operating heavy construction equipment?

I don't quite know what to say about this package. It exists, apparently, to "guide your kid through the real thrills of operating heavy construction equipment."

I had no idea that heavy construction equipment had such a magnetic hold on children. Presumably it does in America. But maybe their building sites aren't populated by the same halfwitted sex pests, with buttocks that start at their shoulder blades, we are proud to call our own in the UK.

Certainly none of the actors in this has a copy of *The Sun* rolled up in their back pockets. Perhaps the construction site worker has the kind of kudos in America that the fighter pilot has here.

The disc starts with the kind of lighthearted American sitcom music that has you scrabbling for the mute button on your TV, and launches straight into humorous introductions involving The Sexy Labourer Chick and The Two Dumb Sidekicks, Dizzy and Nuts. "Hi, I'm Nuts."

"He certainly is..."

Then you're plunged straight into the meat of the package: four highly exciting examples of heavy construction equipment with names of their own - Eddie the Excavator, Billy the Bulldozer, Ruby the Wrecking Ball and Melvin the Steamroller. The fact that Melvin doesn't have an alliterative name is just one of the many examples of top-notch humour contained herein. Your own name, for the duration of the package, is apparently Kiddo.

All the action takes place in full-motion video, with close-ups of gloves on throttles, lingering slow motion shots of shovels emptying dirt into trucks, and humorous stunts at no extra charge. Each of the four machines presents you with a task to complete, which you do using the three controller



The majority of 'interactive' action is video based.



...scream with delight as the excavator scoops up a Dumb Sidekick and drops him into a hole.

| |
|--|
| KIDS ON SITE |
| Price £TBA |
| Contact Acclaim |
| 0171 344 5000 |
| Category   |
| Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DO |



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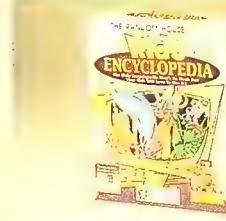
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| Dr Clip Arts | |

VIDEODROME

INSIDE THIS SECTION

Each review is accompanied by a box like this. Here you'll find useful details such as the price and distributor of the title.

Rating All discs are rated out of five for the quality of the content, using the markers below. The quality of the encoding is rated in the verdict box.



Platform

MAC MPC CD-i 3DO

The platform(s) the disc will work on. Some titles are released on a single disc which can be played on several platforms (such as the cover disc to this magazine). Other titles have individual versions released for specific platforms.

There is also a new category: VideoCD. These are discs which conform to the VideoCD standard established by Sony, Philips, Matsushita and JVC. These discs should play back on any system set up to deliver VideoCD (so the individual platforms are not highlighted). For example, a CD-i player with DV cartridge, a 3DO with FMV cartridge, a multimedia PC with a ReelMagic card or a Macintosh and CD-ROM drive equipped with an MPEG card (see box for more details).

Requirements Special hardware requirements (including MPEG) are laid out in the verdict box of each review. If there are no requirements listed, you can safely assume that the disc can be played on the current entry-level machine on each platform. These are:

MAC An LC with 4Mb RAM, a CD-ROM drive and a 256-colour 13/14in monitor.

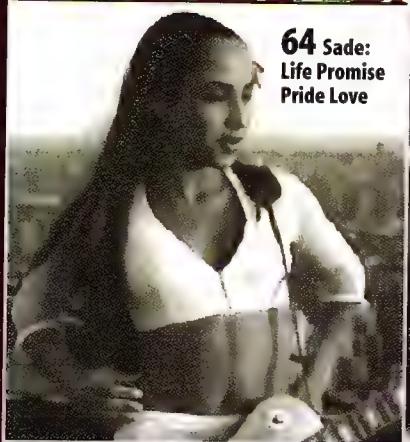
MPC A 25MHz 386 PC with 4Mb RAM, Windows 3.1, a sound card, a VGA monitor and a double-speed CD-ROM drive.

CD-i Any 'base case' CD-i player (for example, 210, 220, 450).

3DO Any 'base case' 3DO player.

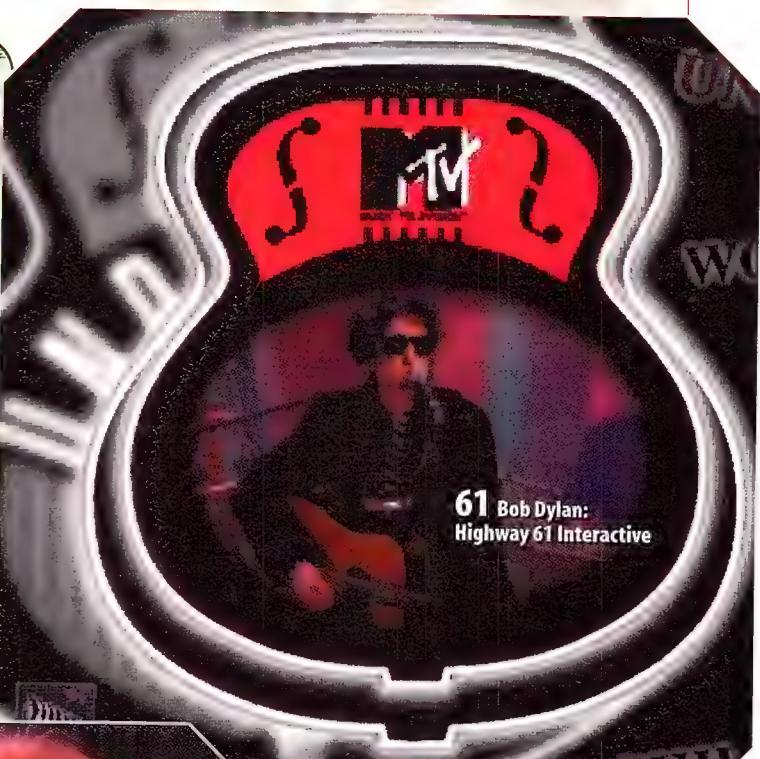


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64 Sade: Life Promise

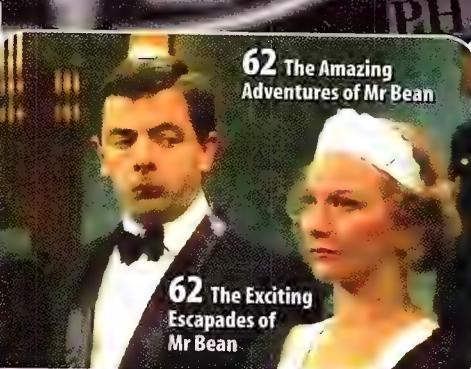
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63 The Accused



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VIDEODROME



Bob Dylan: Highway 61 Interactive



In the 60s, it was easier to park in Greenwich Village.

The cynic in me wanted to headline this piece, "another clapped out old rocker goes interactive". But that would be drastically unfair both to the artist and Graphix Zone, the developer of this disc.

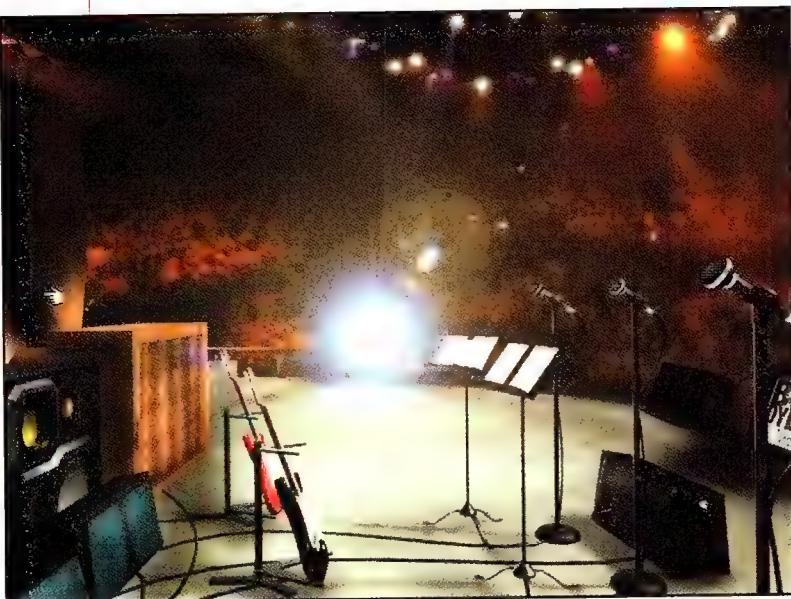
Bob Dylan, born Robert Allen Zimmerman, is arguably the greatest singer-songwriter of the 20th Century, and this dual-format CD-ROM traces his life and times from his birth in 1941, through his 30-year recording and performing career, while striving to recreate the myriad social and political events that influenced his work.

What exactly is Highway 61 Interactive? Well, when you boot up the disc (itself a challenge, it needs an absolute minimum of 4.5Mb free RAM to run on a Mac) you are presented with a rendered montage of Dylan memorabilia. There's no menu or index – Graphix Zone wants you to work for your enjoyment. Most of your

initial interaction with the program involves randomly clicking on icons to see what happens – a kind of Fisher Price activity centre for grown-ups. Some links are pretty obvious – the camera takes you to a photo album. Others are more obscure: a falling leaf transports you to Dylan's family scrapbook? Er, I'll have what you're having, guys.



From Woodstock to MTV, Bobby D's been there and done that.

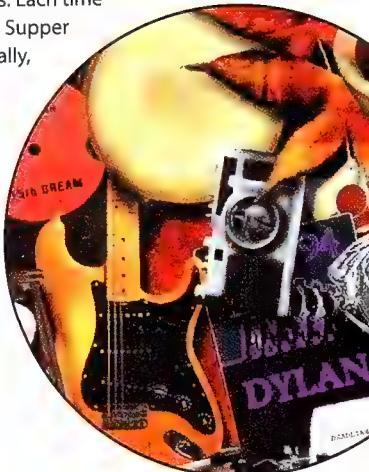


Hey, Mr Tambourine Man, where's our Dylan gone?

Many of these links are simple audio or video clips, but some take you away from the montage to a rendered 3D environment. If you've seen *4! Interactive* you will be familiar with the form. But instead of a tour of Prince's bachelor pad, you are catapulted into a variety of locations that have figured strongly in Dylan's career. There's Greenwich Village back in 1961, complete with a bongo-beating hobo loitering outside the Coffee House. There are the Columbia Recording Studios, circa 1965. And – blow me – now we're backstage at Madison Square Gardens for Dylan's 30th anniversary bash.

To encourage your exploratory exploits, the developers have ensured that the most desirable goodies – never-seen-before footage of Bobby D's 1993 performance at New York's Supper Club – can only be accessed once you've visited all the other six 3D locations. Each time you go 3D you get a portion of the Supper Club ticket, which builds up gradually, until – hey presto – the CD-ROM crashes and you have to start all over again (I know, it's my fault for not saving my progress).

So what about the content? With the support of both Dylan and his record company Sony, there's no shortage on that score. For starters, there's a full CD digital audio track of Dylan's electric version of 'House of the Rising Sun', recorded two years





Despite his millions, Dylan is a modest dresser. Here he lists his favourite outfit.

before the Animals took the song to the top of the charts. Elsewhere there are 10 complete songs and over 40 clips. There are four full-length videos, including the ground breaking promo for 'Subterranean Homesick Blues'. In the recording studio you can unearth out-takes from the 'Like a Rolling Stone' sessions, complete with muso banter.

Plus you get all manner of other Dylan-related material, including a collection of bootleg album covers, Internet addresses for wired buffs, celebrity interviews (including Eric Clapton, Lou Reed and Pearl Jam's Eddie Vedder), a compendium featuring the lyrics to every Bob Dylan song and there's even a chance to view Mr D's etchings.



Meet Al Kooper, organ player and 60s relic.

It's all good solid stuff, a lot of it previously unavailable and often leavened with a dose of irreverent humour. And QuickTime 2.0 means that the video footage is pretty darn

good. But I do have a couple of nagging doubts.

There's no real objective overview of a career that has had its fair share of the rough as well as the smooth (remember Farm Aid?). The 'interactive timeline' feature is shallow on information and the interaction is limited to the odd fragment of hypertext. The lyric compendium is also a missed opportunity. You can only search it by song title, so if you're trying to source an isolated lyric you'll be disappointed. Why didn't they make it a full blown concordance of Dylan's work? A feature allowing you to tap in words like 'Guthrie' or 'Mister', and track their usage across the artist's entire canon of work, would have justified the asking price alone. But perhaps the developers are saving that for another day.

But perhaps I'm seeing the odd dead tree and missing the lush forest. Whatever your doubts about Graphix Zone's

slightly esoteric interface, this is a superbly realised CD-ROM product. I'm not a great Dylan fan, but I kept coming back to the title. Dylan was more than just a songwriter, he was a crucial focus for the cultural, social and political revolution that swept

through the United States and beyond during the 50s and 60s.

Like Woody Guthrie before him, he had an unstoppable desire 'to tell it how he saw it'. And nuggets thrown up by the CD-ROM keep reinforcing this: for instance, the disc tells the story of Hattie Carroll, a black woman who died in 1963 after being assaulted by a certain

William Zantzinger. He was sentenced to only six months in jail, and Dylan went on to immortalise her fate in the 'Lonesome Death of Hattie Carroll'. But as well as providing the full lyrics to the song – plus photos of Zantzinger and Carroll – the CD-ROM also reveals that 33 years later, Zantzinger was in court again: this time for collecting rent from blacks occupying rundown properties which he didn't even own.

The times they haven't changed that much. But such insights help to make Highway 61 Interactive a fascinating experience as well as a worthy, if occasionally flawed, exploration of one of the giants of 20th Century music.



Mat Toor

HIGHWAY 61 INTERACTIVE

Special Requirements

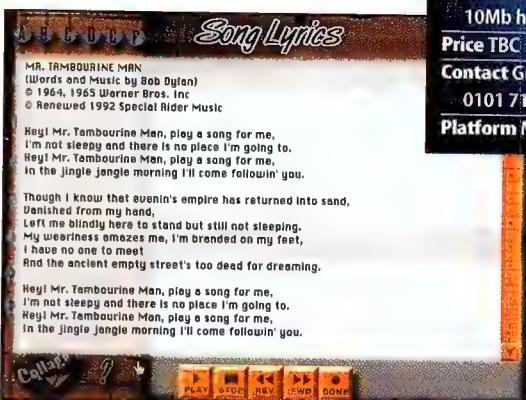
PC: 486SX 25MHz or faster, 8Mb RAM (recommended), 16-bit colour, 15Mb hard disk space, **Mac:** 8Mb RAM, thousands of colours, 10Mb hard disk space

Price TBC

Contact Graphix Zone

0101 714 8333838

Platform MPC Mac CD-i 3DO



The lyric compendium can only be searched by title.



VIDEODROME

Wayne's World 2



Party on again! Or, as many people found when this sequel came out last year, party on for the first time! Because Wayne (Mike Myers) and Garth (Dana Carvey) are funnier the second time around. Which is quite an achievement, given Hollywood's propensity for feeble follow-ups.

The bigger budget has clearly been put to good use, not just ensuring a new storyline but also recruiting some star names – including



I don't look like Jim Morrison, I don't look like Val Kilmer...

Charlton Heston, Kim Basinger, Heather Locklear and Drew Barrymore – for some very quirky supporting roles and cameos. Fans of the babe-licious Tia Carrere, whose very pleasing appearance (*surely acting? – Ed.*) did so much for WW1, will be reassured to know she is given plenty of screen time in WW2.

The film concerns the duo's attempts to stage a massive outdoor pop festival in an



The dynamic dildoes slobber over Heather Locklear. Wayne: "There is a God." Garth: "Heather be thy name."



Illinois backwater, after Wayne experiences recurring visions of The Doors' Jim Morrison and a naked Indian. Highlights (for me, anyway) include Wayne and Garth slobbering over Heather Locklear (Wayne: "There is a God." Garth: "Heather be thy name.") and the kung-fu film parody when Wayne fights with Cassandra's dad (Wayne: "If we are to fight, I would prefer it dubbed and not in subtitles.")

While the CD-i format brings out the best in the film's strong soundtrack (the Aerosmith songs in particular), encoding could be better with many close-up shots losing definition. That said, the concert scenes, bane of many an MPEG-1 title, are exceptionally well handled.



Robert Dwek

| |
|--|
| WAYNE'S WORLD 2 |
| Special Requirements |
| • DV cart for CD-i; MPEG card for MPC/Mac. |
| Price £19.99 (inc VAT) |
| Contact Phillips |
| • 0171 911 3000 |
| Director Stephen Surjik |
| Starring Mike Myers, Dana Carvey, Tia Carrere, Christopher Walken |
| Platform VideoCD |
| Encoding Good |

The Amazing Adventures of Mr Bean



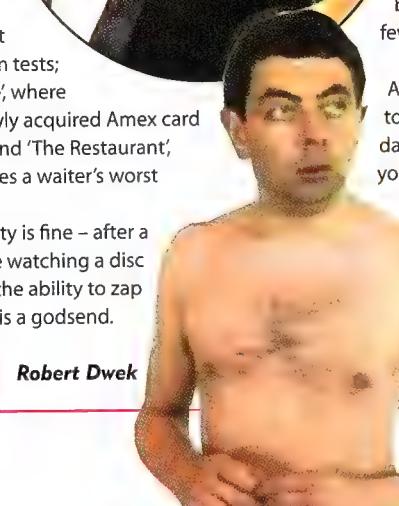
I always used to think there was something a little too contrived about

Rowan Atkinson's latterday Charlie Chaplin creation, Mr Bean. But having re-viewed the first, Golden Rose-winning series and 1990's *The Return of Mr. Bean*, I've changed my tune.

Amazing Mr Bean is a collection of the best Bean sketches. Highlights include 'The Exam', a brilliant play on the

moronic solemnity that accompanies all written tests; 'The Department Store', where Bean finds that his newly acquired Amex card won't do nicely at all; and 'The Restaurant', where Mr Bean becomes a waiter's worst nightmare.

The encoding quality is fine – after a while you forget you're watching a disc and not the telly. And the ability to zap in and out of sketches is a godsend.



Robert Dwek

THE AMAZING ADVENTURES OF MR BEAN

Special Requirements

• DV cart for CD-i; MPEG card for MPC/Mac

Price £17.99 (inc VAT)

Contact Phillips Media

• 0171 911 3000

Director John Howard

Davies

Starring Rowan Atkinson,

Richard Briers

Platform VideoCD

Encoding Good

The Exciting Escapades of Mr Bean



I can see your packed lunch.

Sad to report that it's a case of diminishing returns with this second Mr Bean extravaganza, a compilation of the 1990 and 1991 Beans – 'The Curse Of Mr Bean' and 'Mr. Bean Goes To Town', and including a non-TV sketch at the end. Escapades gives more of a starring role to the weird one's sidekick: his battered old, Robin Reliant-hating Mini, one of the few highlights of this compilation.

'The Horror Movie' also has some nice moments. A classic tale of nerd meets girl, invites her on a date to the cinema and proceeds to embarrass the living daylight out of her. But it's downhill all the way once you start on the 'Mr Bean Goes To Town' section.

Bean shows himself grossly incompetent with TVs, cameras, ID parades, buying shoes, having his picture taken in photo booths, disco dancing... and in generating laughs.



Robert Dwek

THE EXCITING ESCAPADES OF MR BEAN

Special Requirements

• DV cart for CD-i; MPEG card for MPC/Mac

Price £17.99 (inc VAT)

Contact Phillips Media

• 0171 911 3000

Director John Howard

Davies

Starring Rowan Atkinson,

Angus Deayton, Matilda Ziegler

Platform VideoCD

Encoding Good



*"And your
next move?"
- "To sue my
hairdresser."*

The Accused

In the Hollywood scheme of things, *The Accused* is quite a daring film. Sarah Tobias, a young waitress played by Jodie Foster, is gang-raped. Her assailants are arrested, but assistant district attorney Kathryn Murphy (played by Kelly McGillis, herself a former rape victim) accepts a plea bargain rather than risk a trial. The rape is put down to

reckless endangerment on the part of the victim – a move that drives Tobias to despair. Feeling guilty, Murphy embarks on her own personal voyage of redemption. She launches a second prosecution against those who watched and cheered on the rape.

As the trial progresses, and in spite of differences in class and background, both women acquire a mutual respect for one another. At times it begins to look like a feminist take on the American dream, as together Murphy and Tobias overcome male prejudice and violence, against all the odds. *The Accused* is a film about a rape, but this being Hollywood, it's also inevitably a film about triumph over adversity.

The rape scene is depicted in all its graphic awfulness, eschewing the standard, cut-to-shot-of-light-bulb-swinging-from-the-ceiling. Director Jonathan Kaplan's style is unfussy, never distracting the viewer from the excellent acting. Jodie Foster as the feisty hard-drinking, dope-smoking Tobias is mesmerising, a combination of painful vulnerability and steely determination. The encoding is good, although the colours could be bolder, and there is some pixelation in the crowd scenes.

Tobias points out that no woman, however she behaves, 'deserves' to get raped. But in challenging one myth, the film goes some way to reinforcing another, namely that if you don't act tarty you won't get raped.

This is the only quibble with what is otherwise a committed performance by all concerned.

THE ACCUSED
Special Requirements
DV cart for CD-i; MPEG card for MPC/Mac
Price £17.99 (inc VAT)
Contact Philips
0171 911 3000
Director Jonathan Kaplan
Starring Jodie Foster, Kelly McGillis
Platform VideoCD
Encoding Good



*Tobias overcomes male
prejudice against all odds.*

Paul Marino



Witness

Witness is a rare movie. Director Peter Weir gets everything just right. The viewer comes away with the feeling of having watched a satisfying story, well acted, and beautifully shot. The VideoCD transfer is also accomplished, with the famous barn building scene in particular demonstrating that MPEG-1 is capable of delivering near Laserdisc quality video.

For those of you who haven't already seen the film, it concerns an eight-year-old boy Samuel Lapp (Lukas Haas), who is a member of the Amish community, a Puritan sect based in rural Pennsylvania which has forsaken modern ways with a lifestyle pretty much rooted in the 18th Century.

On a rare trip to Philadelphia with his widowed mother Rachel (Kelly McGillis), Samuel witnesses a brutal murder. Enter hard-boiled police captain John Book (Harrison Ford), who finds that he is also a target, after a positive ID from young Samuel implicates his police colleagues. So the trio gets out of the big city and takes refuge amongst the peace-loving, God-fearing Amish.

Book turns out to be an Amish nightmare. Foul-mouthed, aggressive, and unlike his hosts who trust in God, this city boy prefers to pack a Colt. It is this clash of cultures which marks *Witness* out from the usual *policier*. Though fairly simplistic in its approach – Book/urban equals bad, Amish/rural equals good – Weir makes the most of the tensions between the two



*Book, don't box, remember the
good book – aw, forget it!*

lifestyles. Shots of rolling wheat fields, bread-baking and communal house-building are used as visual motifs throughout the film. When Book first arrives at the Lapp's farm, he manages to destroy a house-shaped dovecote by crashing his car into it, very symbolic that.

Needless to say, with Kelly and Harrison stuck in the middle of what is basically one large wheat field, hormones begin to race. Bread-baking, after all, can get a bit tedious. Weir, however, is too good a director to allow the film to become overly predictable. His approach remains consistently fresh and original, and carefully avoids any *Little House on the Prairie* style homilies, which might have tempted lesser mortals.

McGillis and Harrison are excellent in their roles, capturing both the sexual and cultural tensions that exist between their respective characters. All in all a damn good film (whoops, that'll upset the Amish).



*Waddya mean,
why am I wearing
a frisbee?*

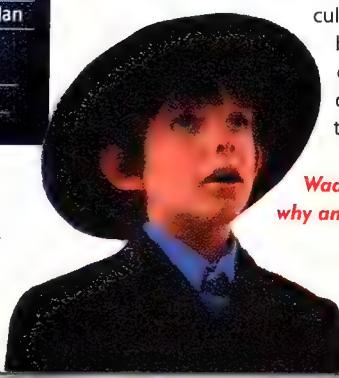
Paul Marino



*Book dishes out the
wheatgerm to health-
conscious colleagues.*



WITNESS
Special Requirements
DV cart for CD-i; MPEG card for MPC/Mac
Price £17.99 (inc VAT)
Contact Philips Media
0171 911 3000
Director Peter Weir
Starring Harrison Ford, Kelly McGillis, Lukas Haas
Platform VideoCD
Encoding Very good



APRIL 1995 CD-ROM MAGAZINE

VIDEODROME

Headcrash

Some people like to take mind-altering drugs and go out dancing. I'm more of a pipeful-of-St-Bruno-and-a-glass-of-late-bottled-vintage man myself, but I'm quite partial to flickering visuals and pumped up techno while I finish the *Telegraph* crossword.

Headcrash is all you need to have your own rave at home (except for a muddy field, bouncers with dogs and some Contac capsules, of course) because it contains eight trance tracks and some wildly fluctuating visuals –

which you can interact with.

The scam works like this: you set the track off and the

visuals start moving. There's a background effect which looks like a plane of video feedback reflected off itself and a foreground pattern which is a cartoonish figure or a word or an abstract scrimshaw which scrolls over the background effect.

You choose to control either or both with the thumbstick. Pumping the controller makes the effect under control scroll around the screen. Holding the button down while rolling the ball around flicks through the available patterns and visuals. (By the way, if you can get your hands on a trackball or roller



My mum... after Headcrash hit me.



Just swirl the foreground over the background – and then throw up.



How I felt after a pipeful of St Bruno...

controller you will get genuine real-time control over the movement – slow pans, quick spins – which can create some genuinely visceral experiences).

The basic idea means interactivity can be more than a tree of pre-defined choices, but otherwise it's a bit limited. There isn't enough variety in the background, and the cartoonish things hardly push CD-i to its limits. Developer Hex doesn't

seem to have progressed since last year's *E-scape* and *Anti-Static*. The music is all thumping loud loops and people shouting things like: "You will die" and "You are a failure" (repeated in the foreground). Fun, if you like that sort of thing.

Overall it's a fantastic idea – it's just waiting for someone with some better content to exploit it to its full potential.



Jim Smith

HEADCRASH

Special Requirements

DV cart for CD-i

Price £29.99 (inc VAT) part of a three-set deal

Contact Philips Media 0171 911 3000

Track Listing *Nacht*; *55 Sync*;

Schomp; *Crack*;

Chameleon; *Kunk*;

Sputnik; *Trancer*; *Disc*

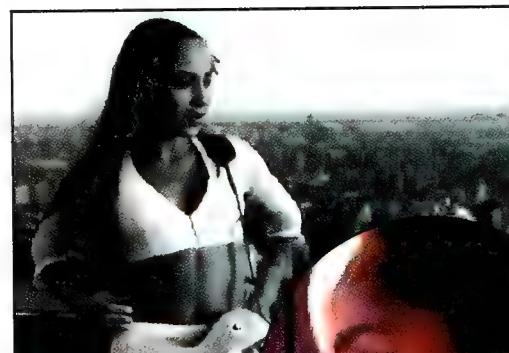
Tonic

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DO

Sade: Life Promise Pride Love

So I'm sitting in my Golf GTI, wearing my red braces. Got my Filofax on the seat beside me, and I'm listening to Sade. Yes I am that smooth operator. Argh, no! Not the '80s. Please, no, I can't bear it.

I used to think that it was Sade's great misfortune to be forever associated with the decade of designer pasta and Thatcherism, but watching *Life Promise Pride Love*, a compilation of video releases from her *Diamond Life*, *Promise*, *Stronger than Pride*, and *Love Deluxe* albums, there is no getting away from it. Sade is very '80s. When you see the videos back to back, certain motifs



I bared my bippy decades before Madonna...

Some of the early videos suffer from graininess and the odd artefact, perhaps because of the quality of the masters, but the latter tracks show what the format can do.

All the old favourites are here, 'Smooth Operator', 'Your Love is King', and 'No Ordinary Love'. Sound quality is superb and the Latin rhythms are delivered with English cool, by the former members of funk band *Pride*, which Sade (Helen Adu) fronted.

In the final track, 'Feel no Pain', from her last album *Love Deluxe*, we see signs that the '80s dream of untroubled opulence is beginning to



shatter. The video appears for some bizarre reason to have been shot in the Mojave Desert. Some obscure visual metaphor for the emptiness of unemployment, no doubt? Which sums it all up really – vacuous, pretty, inoffensive.

John Kimmage



OmniMedia's latest interface. Cool operator?

emerge. New York, Vegas, Spain – a yuppie kaleidoscope of cocktail bars and casinos. And whatever the songs are about, the videos are crammed with dodgy Latin blokes with too much hair gel getting their faces slapped.

This VideoCD is blessed with OmniMedia's delightfully designed custom interface, and the encoding quality is good though not exceptional.



SADE: LIFE PROMISE PRIDE LOVE

Requires DV for CD-i; MPC card for MPC/Mac

Price £19.99 (inc VAT)

Contact Philips Media 0171 911 3000

Platform VideoCD

Encoding Good

Track listing Your Love is King; Smooth Operator; Hang on to Your Love; Never as Good as the First Time; Sweetest Taboo; Is it a Crime; Paradise; Nothing Can Come Between Us; Turn My Back; Love is Stronger than Pride; No Ordinary Day; Cherish The Day; Kiss Of Life; Feel No Pain

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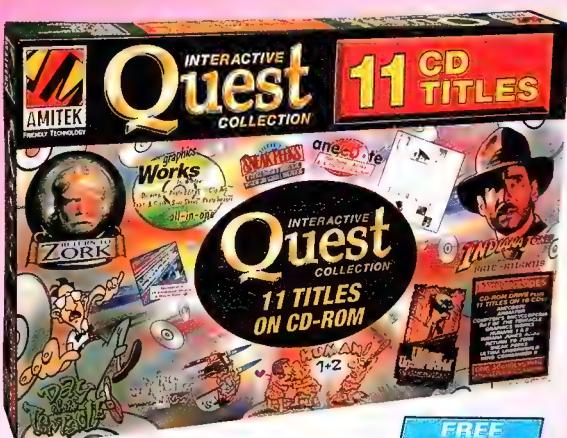
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Music is a mass market phenomenon. Multimedia, as it stands today, is not. Those two sentences help explain why, for all their innovation, products like Xplora-1, Jump, Prince Interactive and the rest have sold in limited quantities to a very small cross section of the public.

But there are other problems inherent in the very idea of a music CD-ROM. They are sold in computer stores or in the games sections of record shops, well away from the music albums and singles. When they are played back the punter is sitting two feet away from a computer screen, listening to the audio on a couple of four-inch Taiwanese speakers. Music titles for Macintosh won't work on IBM-compatible PCs, and vice versa.

Whatever interactive music is, under these circumstances, it is not rock and roll.

Realising that current CD-ROM technologies simply aren't suitable as a carrier for interactive music, the computer industry has been working on a standard which allows for a new breed of interactive music discs which are set to hit the shops in the next couple of months.

What the music industry actually wants, and is about to get in the shape of a new format called CD Plus, is an interactive CD fully compatible with standard audio CD players. It's a CD you buy from record shops and plug in and play on your hi-fi as easily as you can on your computer - a CD-ROM you can dance to as well as interact with.

On an ordinary CD player, a CD Plus disc will reproduce the whole album as the artist recorded it. But if the same disc is inserted into the CD-ROM drive of a computer, the user has access to a whole lot more.

Until now, the fundamental problem has been combining the red book audio with the yellow book computer data on a single disc (for more information on the various specification documents see the box on p68). With current methods it is possible to mix the data types, but track one has to be set aside for data and computer data doesn't

sound very good amplified through the speakers of your average audio CD player. This leads to a system whereby users had to be advised not to play the first track.

The first discs to do this were early CD-i compatible titles such as Pavarotti, released in the late 1980s and branded 'CD-i Ready'. More recently titles ranging from Bob Dylan's Highway 61 Interactive to games like The 7th Guest have repeated the formula using Mac and PC data.

These hybrid discs can, of course, be played on a standard audio CD player. But if the user attempts to play the first track - or any other track containing data - the output can consist of some very high-pitched screeching. Not just an inconvenience, but a risk - if played at a sufficient volume of damaging a pair of speakers.

Fortunately the chances of hearing anything at all when attempting to play a data track on a music CD player are minimal, as



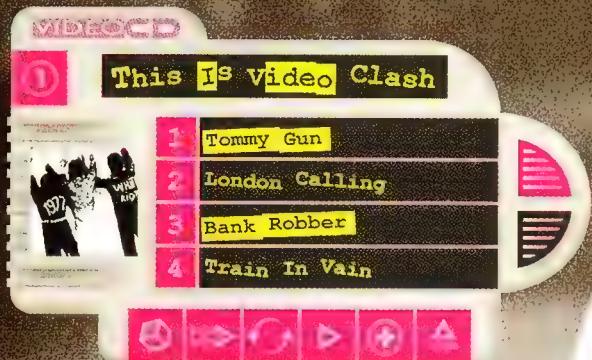
the NEW ROCK

You wait years for a credible interactive format and then two come along at once. In a special CD-ROM Magazine report, Warren Chrisman and Herbert Wright take the wraps off a brace of pop-tabulous new technologies - CD Plus and Video CD Plus - which could take interactive music to the masses...

THE NEW ROCK N ROLL



n'Roll





THE NEW ROCK N ROLL

Enhanced CD



the vast majority of modern CD players detect the screeches and either remain silent or skip to the next track automatically. "There were only a couple of hundred thousand Japanese CD players that wouldn't mute the audio," recalls Simon Turner, director of Philips Research Laboratories. "But that was enough to make the record companies wary."

Even leaving aside the inconvenience, or possible damage, caused by the high-pitched noises, asking the mass market to accept the user-unfriendliness of skipping track one is simply unacceptable.

Despite these problems, discs containing more music than data have been launched at regular intervals. At the end of last year a collaboration between Slaughterback records and Virgin Interactive, saw an album titled Sea of Tranquillity released with the first track containing a demo of Creature Shock. Mike Oldfield's The Songs of Distant Earth contained a bonus track for Mac owners, and in this very issue, up-and-coming rockers The Smalltown Heroes explain how they've cut the first ever CD-ROM/CD single.

All of which brings us to CD Plus – the answer to all these problems. Surely such a system represents a technological break through as significant as Edison's invention of the gramophone. Well, no, actually. Philips and Sony – who created the Red Book standard for audio CDs in 1980, have simply agreed on a new mixed-mode specification. "There's been a lot of arm waving but the technology is nothing particularly new," says Turner. "It's been around



One of the first multimedia music hybrids on CD-ROM, *Don't Play Track One*'s title neatly encapsulates the data problem.

since Photo CD came out and introduced the concept of multi-session discs."

While multi-session Photo CDs allow you to lay down several batches of images at different times on a single disc, CD plus uses the 'sessions' to segregate the CD audio tracks and the computer data. Because all audio CD players are single-session drives, and

the red book data is placed in the first session on the CD-ROM, they will play CD Plus discs like standard audio CD. The computer information is 'invisible' (and, more importantly, inaudible) because audio CD players can't 'see' it.

But when you place the same disc in a multi-session CD-ROM drive – or console – the yellow book computer information becomes readable. It's a simple and elegant solution, although people are sceptical of whether it can really be called a standard in the same way as, say, red book audio.

"A lot of people say it's a standard, when really it's just an agreement," argues Alan McCaskill, director of CD-ROM developers OmniMedia. "The only standard is that you put audio on the first session and data on the second session."

But it's not quite as straightforward as that. New software drivers – like those to be bundled with Windows 95 – will be needed to read the yellow book data, and the precise order of the various flavours of these applications



Video CD Plus

The biggest consumer problem with VideoCD is the limitations on interactivity. At best, VideoCD music titles offer essentially the same controls as a VCR while at the other end of the interactivity spectrum, CD-ROM is awash with the fruits of interactive design: hotspots, animations, cross-connectivity between databases and search engines are standard multimedia ingredients. Someone sooner or later had to close the interactivity gap.

A small English company called OmniMedia has been tackling the issue since the VideoCD 1.1 standard was set. VideoCD 1.1 specified how MPEG1 was to be formatted for CD, and produced a trade demo VideoCD launch disc as early as January 94. OmniMedia director Allen McCaskill has his eye on the one million VideoCD players installed last year – an installed base that is predicted to surge to an expected 2.8 million this year and 4.9 million by the end of 1996 (according to Dataquest). In the process he realised that "the VideoCD industry will have to build easy-to-use front-ends if the medium is to survive."

The first OmniMedia VideoCD interface offered not just VCR-style functionality, but also a multi-lingual help

VideoCD as it currently stands is a promising standard, offering all the advantages of audio with the added bonus of VHS-quality video. But the interactivity is limited.



mode, track selection, random play, track looping and track programming. OmniMedia already has four VideoCD music titles, Sade's Life Promise Love Pride, Judas Priest's Metal Works 73-79, This Is Video Clash and The The's Infected – The Movie, and the OmniMedia interface has been used in EMI's VideoCD line up which includes David Bowie, Queen's Greatest Flix and Pink Floyd.

The next step was to bring CD-ROM levels of interactivity to VideoCD. Last August the VideoCD 2.0 standard was set allowing hi-resolution MPEG still frames, among other things since then OmniMedia has invested over £150,000 in the development of an interactive interface which they've now branded VideoCD Plus.

At the moment it's less of a standard than a set of production tools for developers. CD-i and Windows compatibility is up and running and Omimedia will broaden the tools to embrace new platforms such as the Mac, Sony Playstation and Sega Saturn as and when they enter the MPEG arena. The toolkit (for Sun workstations) will be available this summer and, with a claimed six to eight weeks production cycle to produce an interactive VideoCD they should be attractive to record companies and other asset holders.

So what does Video CD Plus actually offer developers? Well you've seen the Chart Show on TV. Imagine you could watch a VideoCD with a similar set of interactive icons that overlay the video with boxes packed with info and gossip. That's just for starters. A typical VideCD Plus title could also offer the following features when played back on a PC:

- 40 minutes of MPEG video with CD quality audio
- 40 full screen photographs
- automatic connection to Omnimedia's World Wide Web site (not yet up and running, but for more details post a

With VideoCD Plus, snapshots and biogs of your favourite artists are a click away





within that second session (Windows, Mac, CD-i, Playstation etc) needs to be set in stone. These technical specifications are due to be rubber-stamped by the end of February, but so far it is unclear whether the various companies involved will try and impose strict guidelines on the interface and functionality of CD Plus compatible discs.

"The US record companies are saying it should have this, it should have that – lyrics, interviews, whatever – but that sort of creative standard is impossible to enforce," says OmniMedia's McCaskill.

The reality seems to be that CD Plus is less a new standard, and more a new application of existing technology. In the same way that the Sony Walkman was not a technological breakthrough but nevertheless still changed the way millions of people listen to music. And music is the application that CD Plus is made for.

Music discs using the CD Plus system are likely to be known as Enhanced CDs – a name intended to indicate that the consumer is getting a normal (audio) CD plus something extra. Not surprising then that the music publishers are set to charge for that little extra – current estimates vary between £2-4 on top of the typical price of a CD-based album.

So what will be getting for our money? There's no set formula for an Enhanced CD, although a typical CD's 45-50 minutes of digital audio leaves space for 150-170Mb of data.

The preview discs which we have explored, point to the way the content is likely to head. Rather than using a full 3D interactive environment as used in currently available discs from Peter Gabriel, David Bowie and so on, most discs are likely to have a simple front-end menu for fast and easy access to the attractions.



message to info@omni.com) which enables the CD to be supplemented by up-to-the minute on-line information.

- a database of biography, tours, and discography containing up to 4000 words, accessed via a year-by-year timeline
- a Karaoke section with on screen lyrics
- a trivia Quiz of 100 questions
- up to 5 minutes of audio interviews.

A 486 PC will not even need an MPEG card to play the video back full screen, although the frame rate will drop from 25 to 12-15 per second (full screen) without it.

This list is just one configuration. Because in practise the amount of interactive data depends on the amount of linear MPEG video. So if you use less video, you free up more CD space



In the long term
VideoCD Plus offers
the possibility of
Internet dial-up for the
latest news and tour
dates.

A wealth of
'interactive' data will
be available, including
biogs, discographies,
track lists and a quiz.

The artwork is likely to tie-in with the concept of the album, with artists using the medium to fulfil a gap left when the lavish LP covers and sleeves gave way to audio CD boxes. Expect to see the return of sleeve notes as well as shots and profiles of the band members, while a discography is a certainty also, simply because it's easy to do and a good way to promote other discs.

A key feature will be full-length videos in MPEG format (170 Mb translates into almost 20 minutes of MPEG-1 video), and some titles will offer both video and radio interviews as well.

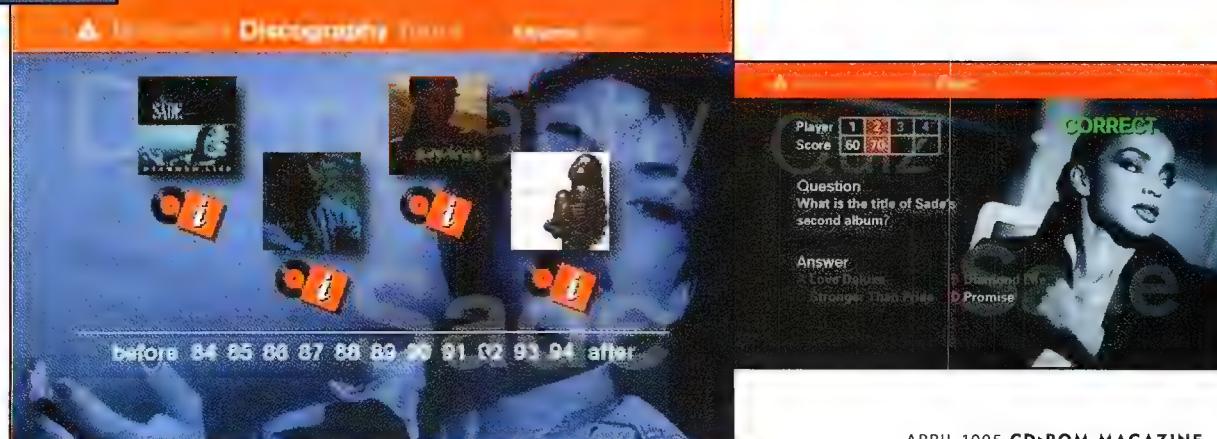
Enhanced CDs will probably also feature the words for each of the songs on the album, but rather than just simple Karaoke-style text (another failed format for interactive music) the user will be able to click on a word and the music will jump to the exact section of the song where it can be heard.

Finally, full internet access may be offered by many bands for fast and direct connection to the latest information on the artist. (Many record companies, including Sony and Warner Bros. already offer WWW pages). Of course these are just example applications. And we should expect the unexpected as the medium matures.



for background information, discographies and the rest. "It's just a question of how you decide to slice up the pie," explains McCaskill.

To the lay observer the only difference



ALWAYS JUDGE A BOOK BY THE COLOUR...

When Philips and Sony defined the proprietary standards that became CD-audio and CD-ROM, the documents were bound in different colour covers. By tradition, each colour represents another level of standardisation.

The Red Book – This defines the media, the recording and mastering process and the player device for standard CD-audio. CD Plus albums contain the full complement of red book audio data.

The Yellow Book – This specification defines additional error correction needed to master and play back computer data on CD-ROM.

The Green Book – This defines the specifications to record, master and play back CD-ROMs that conform to Philips' CD-i standard.

The Orange Book – This extends the basic Red and Yellow Books to enable both re-recordable (magneto-optic) multi session discs like PhotoCD and CD Plus as well as 'write once' recordable CDs CD-R.

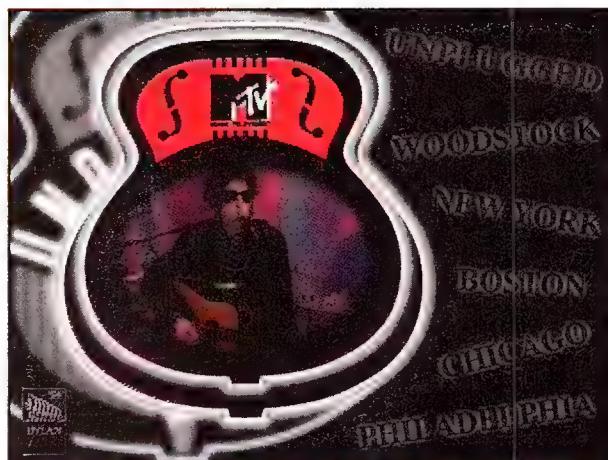
The White Book – The most recent 'volume' in this multi-coloured series, the White Book lays down the specifications of the MPEG-1-based VideoCD standard that delivers 72 minutes of VHS quality video on a single CD.



THE NEW ROCK N ROLL

The data on all Enhanced CD discs will be cross-platform, (although the precise platforms supported has yet to be confirmed). Both PCs and Macs will definitely support CD Plus, with software to read the Enhanced CD data becoming available soon. Apple is known to be supporting the system for Mac owners while Microsoft is also committed to the standard with Windows 95 (due in August). This will include new built-in device drivers which may be necessary for some CD-ROM drives to read the discs (DOS drivers will be available from hardware vendors).

Sceptics might think that Enhanced CDs may take time before they are accepted, but for a change the music industry appears to be in a hurry. Perhaps not surprisingly considering its stable-mate co-founded the format, Sony Music (and its subsidiaries which include Columbia and Epic) are leading the way. It is set to release 12 discs in the first quarter of this year, including albums from Bob Dylan and Alice in Chains (all the others are currently highly secret projects). Significantly though, most other major record companies have committed to the technology too, including BMG, Arista, Mercury, Capitol and Geffen.



Although Bob Dylan's *Highway 61 Interactive* contains a lot more data than music, users still have the track one problem.

What's in it for them? Well, they can sell into new markets, and will no doubt hope to capture some of the business back from the videogame-playing teenage market. They can dust off back catalogue products, add a bit of interactivity and sell them at a premium price again.

But perhaps the biggest use for enhanced CD will be as a promotional tool. CD Plus singles could contain supplementary audio tracks with details about the upcoming album, showing the sleeve, track listings, catalogue number as well as including clips of all the songs. After all,

singles have always been almost loss-leading sales tools for the albums where the big profits are made, and CD Plus gives the record companies unprecedented opportunities to sell.

Ultimately though, they are hoping that Enhanced CDs will take over from standard audio CDs because this will finally furnish them with an excuse for charging £15 'plus' or more for a 40p plastic disc.

Welcome to the new Rock and Roll.



between a Video CD Plus title and a full-blown interactive CD-ROM will be the quality of the video - VideoCD offers high quality full screen, full motion images that blows away even the best QuickTime 2.0 movies. In most other respects - on-screen hot spots, hypertext, animations etc. - VideoCD Plus is a dead ringer for its interactive cousins.

But there are definite limitations to the VideoCD Plus system. "It's basically a point and click mechanism," concedes McCaskill. "While we can offer the complexity you need to navigate a disc and receive stacks of information, the stuff you're presented with is unalterable."

For instance a CD-ROM programmed in Macromedia Director might allow you to take control of an animation, or even change its colours. In VideoCD Plus that animation will be an MPEG stream that cannot be manipulated.

But such limitations are unlikely to be much of a handicap as OmniMedia is unashamedly pitching VideoCD Plus at a much wider market than the enthusiasts who currently buy music and general interest CD-ROMs.

"I reckon the discs will come out for around £24.99 rather than the £40 plus people are paying for music CD-ROMs now. That will make the consumers very happy while still making the artists a lot of money," says McCaskill.

He says the presentation and content of these new music CDs will be radically different, with less emphasis on esoteric interfaces and more on accessibility to the typical music punter.

"They're not spending four hours finding where the door is or how to pack the artist's bloody suitcase like some music CD-ROMs I could mention. People want to be entertained, not mentally challenged."

The first titles should hit the streets in May, subject to the artists' approval. These are interactive versions of the Sade and The Clash discs, the latter likely to use loads of never-seen-before live footage.

And perhaps most importantly of all, OmniMedia says there are no problems whatsoever in making VideoCD Plus compatible with the new enhanced audio CDs. The VideoCD Plus applications (Windows, CD-i, Mac etc.) simply reside on the second session of the disc, along with the MPEG-1 VideoCD data. The record giant EMI is already planning a Summer release of a dual VideoCD Plus/CD+ disk featuring a major UK artist.

With VideoCD Plus, OmniMedia has come up with a format that

may finally present a challenge to CD-ROM itself. With its mix of high quality video, genuine cross platform compatibility and mass market presentation and price points, the standard could at a stroke overcome many of the hurdles that have held back 'genuine' CD-ROM products in the non-games marketplace.

Of course there are serious compromises made to the level and type of interactivity and the amount of non-video information on the discs. But OmniMedia reckons that Joe Public is more likely to be turned on by a product he is already buying - like a music video or movie - embellished with small but significant layers of interactivity, than a completely new type of product embellished with a smattering of low-resolution video.

All this avoids the issue of the emerging standards battle for new Digital Video Disc formats, but McCaskill is not losing any sleep about that. "We've got a great product already, so just think how we can go to town if and when high density CD comes around."

Pop group The The's *Infected* on VideoCD. The interactive features of VideoCD Plus could prove even more contagious.



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CD-ROM

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- Coffee table CD-ROM from Darling Kindersley
- CD-i and 3DO go head to head
- The problem with CD-ROM games
- Top Soundcards for the PC
- 48 CD-ROMs Reviewed and Rated.

AA03A

What's on the Disc

- Playable demos
- Gold Disc Astound
- SuperKarts
- The Cure
- Three Tenors
- Sultans Of Ping

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- Monty Python's Complete Waste of Time
- The Killer Bs
- The Making of... Burn:Cycle
- Educational discs
- 54 CD-ROMs Reviewed and Rated.

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- **VIDEOCD SAMPLES** – Victimised, The Outlaw, Daffy Duck & Friends, Ray Charles – The Genius, Lady Day – The Billy Holiday Story and Bruce Lee – The Man and Myth

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AA04A

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DECEMBER 1994



What's in the Mag

- David Bowie talks multimedia
- The Making of Dark Forces
- The ABC of VideoCD
- MPEG boards on test
- Interactive City
- 42 CD-ROMs Reviewed and Rated.

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- **VIDEOCD SAMPLES** – Toxic Avenger, Night of the Living Dead, Reefer Madness, Metropolis and Class of Nuke 'Em High

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AA05A

VOL 1 NO 6
JANUARY 1995

What's in the Mag

- Rocket Science
- Paul McKenna on CD-ROM?
- Interactive advertising
- Supercharge your system
- Multimedia PCs on test.
- 51 CD-ROMs Reviewed and Rated.



What's on the Disc

- **VIDEOCD SAMPLES** – Hallowe'en, Raquel Welch's Lose 10lbs in three weeks, Penn & Teller, Don't try this at home, Eyewitness Shark, Popeye, Satchmo

INTERACTIVE REVIEWS – Information Finder, Ecstatica, Alone in the Dark I and II, Magic Carpet, Rebel Assault, Macbeth, Multimedia Strauss, FIFA International Soccer

PLAYABLE DEMOS – Power Drive, Cyberwar, Holiday Lemmings, The Incredible Machine 2, Cyclones and Creature Shock for PC – Firefall, Another World, Crystal Caliburn for Mac.

AA06A

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- The CD-ROM Magazine Awards
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- Dave Stewart talks CD-ROM
- Mindbending multimedia from ESP
- The BBC's multimedia plans revealed.
- 45 CD-ROMs Reviewed and Rated.

What's on the Disc

- **VIDEOCD SAMPLES** – Sade, The The, Judas Priest, The Clash, The Chant of Jimmy Blacksmith and La Grande Illusion

INTERACTIVE REVIEWS – SuperKarts, Cinemania '95, Encarta '95, Harry and the Haunted House, Mutant Rampage, A.D.A.M., A Brief History of Time, Little Big Adventure and Star Control II.

PLAYABLE DEMOS – Wing Commander III, US Navy Fighters, Cyberia, Hammer of the Gods and Ultimate Body Blows for PC – Out of the Sun and Marathon for the Mac.

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VOL 1 NO 8
MARCH 1995

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- 21st Century Fox
- Web Crawlers Guide to Movies
- Multimedia Speakers on Test
- Meet MediaBand
- Secrets Of Stargate

What's on the Disc

- **STARGATE** – Hollywood secrets revealed
- **VIRTUAL VEGAS** – an interactive tour of CES
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MAC PC

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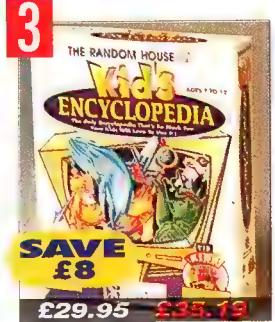
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MAC PC

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MAC PC

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MAC

Develops problem solving, logical reasoning and basic computer skills. Gives kids an opportunity to learn and improve critical maths skills in an engaging environment filled with games, music, animated characters and more. Each activity includes multiple levels of difficulty, designed to reinforce kids' confidence and motivation. Skills learned include addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, equivalencies, estimation, fractions, pattern recognition, spatial orientation, shape recognition, scale and symmetry.

CDI

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ENTERTAINMENT

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| Iron Helix | MAC PC | £25.00 | £29.38 |
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| Laura Bow 2 | PC | £29.00 | £34.08 |
| Lemmings | CDI | £22.97 | £26.99 |
| Nomad | PC | £19.00 | £22.33 |
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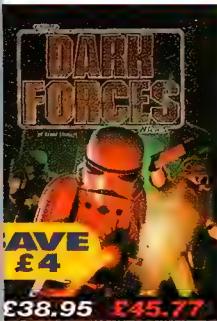


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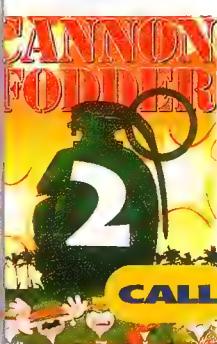
PC



Alone In The Dark 3
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PC

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| FIFA International Soccer | 3DO | £36.95 | £43.42 |
| FIFA International Soccer | PC | £28.95 | £34.02 |
| Grand Prix | PC | £12.50 | £14.69 |
| International Soccer (Ver 2.0) | PC | £11.95 | £14.04 |
| John Madden Football | 3DO | £32.95 | £38.72 |
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| Pinball | CDI | £22.97 | £26.99 |
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| World Cup USA 94 | PC | £24.95 | £29.32 |

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| Concise Oxford English Dictionary | PC | £45.00 | £52.88 |
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| The Joy of Sex | MAC PC | £29.95 | £35.19 |
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| 7th Guest | MAC | £36.95 | £43.42 |
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| Connect Four | CDI | £15.31 | £17.99 |
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| Lost Files of Sherlock Holmes | 3DO | £32.95 | £38.72 |
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MUSIC

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| Viking Opera Guide | PC | £54.95 | £64.57 |
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In this month's round-up of cool, original or just plain weird Net sites, Jim Smith takes in the beautiful game, covets a pair of NASA-designed socks, learns an Eric Cantona joke, turns the eye of God onto a Kristian Kulture magazine, visits a software museum, and gets plastered on virtual beer. Phew!

Innovations



That's right, that's right, it's a new and wonderful and useless product that has colonised the Sunday papers & now on the Web.

My right hand is now covered in a white glove, you have to register your name and address before you are allowed access to the innovations site. Having said that, they seem to be so good that you can't get rid of them, as you can register as Eric Cantona, cell 19, Broadcast if you want to avoid being noticed by just a small crowd.

Once inside it's the familiar selection of new products described in Innovations, though these NASA-designed socks are just one of the new highlights, although I could find no personal favourite, the mind can never dream of growing your cat on dog.

Innovations Gift Point

INNOVATIONS

Gift Point

Welcome to Innovations Gift Point, a revolutionary new concept in interactive shopping. You are going to be entering a world of exciting gift ideas, all available at your fingertips.

Delivery
The vast majority of our products are delivered within 10 days, but please allow up to 28 days to cover any eventuality (particularly in the case of personalised or larger items). We can deliver to anywhere in the UK except the Channel Islands.

We Are Leeds!

Welcome to the LEEDS UNITED web pages!

PLEASE READ THE DISCLAIMER

NEWS

Football

<http://www.atm.ch.cam.ac.uk/sports/webs.html>



The World Wide Web has been so quickly assimilated into the beautiful game that listing individual Web services would be pointless; there are so many of them. The best place to start is here, on the Pure Web hotlink listing.

Football in all its variations is available here, from International news to Dutch football news culled live from the pages of Teletext.

There are also links to nearly every Premier League team (only Crystal Palace and Coventry are for some reason without Web pages), and a surprising number of teams from the exciting Endsleigh league and below. The lowest placed League team with a Web page is Colchester United.

Non-leaguers with a WWW page:

Little Plough and Barrow.

The levelling wonder of the World Wide Web means that the best pages do not necessarily belong to the glamour clubs. Manchester United's is fairly dull and, while it pains me to say it, Wimbledon's is quite good (sample joke: "Why is Eric Cantona like Camilla Parker-Bowles? They've both had a leg over at the Palace.").



Rec. Sports. Soccer - The WEB Page

Welcome to Rec. Sports. Soccer - The WEB Page. This page contains everything found in the FAQ as well as lots of other little goodness as well.

www.surfers and people looking for the very latest results and tables should check out the Pure WEB page.

The WWW-Virt. Sports Page

The WWW Virtual Library page is at <http://www.atm.ch.cam.ac.uk/sports/webs.html>

Contents

- The new FAQ (HTML version)
- The WEB - Great news and results and lots to go
- The Pure WEB page is sorted by country
- The English Premier League
- The Rec. Sport Soccer (Email) FAQ

Snakeoil

<http://fender.onramp.net/~analyst/snake/Snakeoil.html>

'Your on-line guide to Kooky Kontemporary Kristian Kulture' says the subtitle: TV evangelists in other words, The TV holy-roller has fallen out of the public view as a stereotype since a lot of the scarier aspects of American fundamentalism disappeared when the president (Reagan) who believed all that stuff stepped down.

Snakeoil is a vicious, spiteful and very funny magazine devoted to the abusurder shores of TV preaching: On offer in its online version are first-person testimonies about people winding TV preachers such up to snapping point; and an illustrated guide to sideshow-charlatans-turned-TV-god-botherers.

SNAKE OIL

YOUR GUIDE TO KOOKY KONTTEMPORARY KRISTIAN KULTURE

Snake Oil

is Your Guide to Kooky Kontemporary Kristian Kulture. This is an electronic preview of Snake Oil #3. Read

copies, back issues and subscriptions may be obtained by contacting

Snake Oil

Dept. Q

Dallas, Texas 75214

or email Neurosis@ix.netcom.com

Software museum

<http://www.xs4all.nl/~rvtol/softmus.html>

This is a weird one. Run by a very strange young Dutchman called Ruud H G van Tol, this is exactly what it says it is: a museum of software. Such treats on offer include the full file listings of Word 1 and DOS 1.1, and a host of links to other computer museums on-line.

At the moment the listings of the original installation files are all you will see if you log on here; Ruud hopes to upgrade the site to include really exciting things like GIFs of the original floppies and such. Ruud is always on the look out for old software so if you have something really really ancient (you know, like over eight years old) e-mail him at rvtol@xs4all.nl.

Not everyone will get it...

IBM PC COBOL (May 1984)

[The Software Museum, item LANG-0001](http://www.xs4all.nl/~rvtol/softmus.html)

IBM Personal Computer COBOL Compiler Version 1.30 (Copyright IBM Corp 1982 (C)Copyright Microsoft Corp 1982 Licensed Universal - Program Property of IBM

Disk 1 of 2

Volume in drive A is COBOL
Filesystem of A is FAT
COBOL1.COB 37 504 13-25-84 12 50
COBOL1.OTR 13 312 01-04-84 12 50
COBOL1.DTR 13 550 01-04-84 12 50
COBOL14.COB 4 912 01-14-84 12 50
COBOL14.OTR 4 912 01-14-84 12 50
COBOL14.DTR 4 912 01-14-84 12 50
TC.PRD 2 456 29-14-82 12 50
TC.MSD 2 456 29-14-82 12 50
8 files(s) 141 815 bytes
216 512 bytes free

Disk 2 of 2

Atom

<http://www.atom.co.jp/>

Atom is the way Web sites ought to go. It's unusual to pick out a whole physical server for mention but everything on the Atom machine in Japan is cool, cool, cool.

The main business of Atom is music: Japanese Ambient, Trip Hop and House rules. You can download a bewildering variety of long samples (2Mb-plus) from bands with names like Studio Apes and Silent Poets.



One of the main strands to Atom's activities is an art gallery section that features some very abstract and post-modern Japanese art.

If you like your art esoteric and mystifying these are the pages for you, although more down-to-earth kink-fans may prefer the tasteful bondage photographs of Hisayoshi Osawa.



Get wired in '95. With every issue of CD-ROM Magazine, we provide free Internet access and all the software you need to check out these Web sites for yourself. Simply load up the Web browser, log on to our home pages, and click on one of the interactive hyperlinks provided.



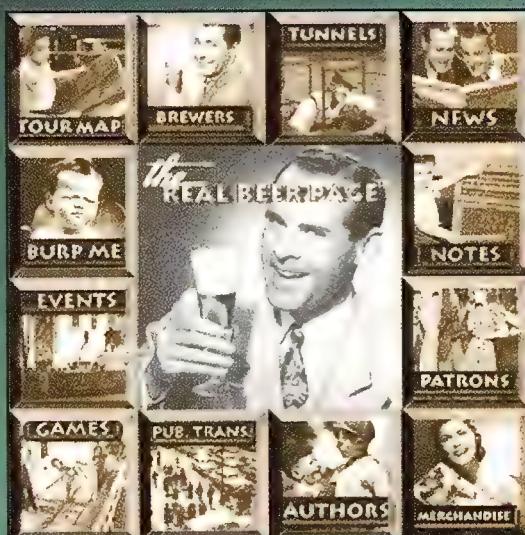
Beer beer beer

<http://and.com/RealBeer/>

Budweiser and Miller Lite are the worst ambassadors of the US brewing industry, having convinced the rest of us that American beer is bland, tasteless and, worst of all, made out of rice.

In truth, there are many beers in the US worth drinking, and if you need an excuse to find out about them, this server is dedicated to Californian microbreweries (sort of one step up from home brewing), as well as larger cult brandnames such as the San Francisco Anchor brewery. If you're ever in California this set of pages gives you the scoop on which breweries to visit, how to get there by public transport (not at all an easy thing in Cali) and what to do when you get there, apart from fall over.

It is, in fact, a perfect model for a European beer server, if anyone can be bothered to swill down the last of their Old Scrotum and write some HTML code, although I suspect CAMRA members are too busy lamenting the decline of village cricket and the brass band to have learnt about this new-fangled technology.



This site also contains the Friday night beer of choice, the *Real Beer Page*, a collection of links to beer reviews, news, and a polyglot collection of links to beer mailing lists. There's also a section for general beer links, a section for beer news, a section for beer reviews, and a section for beer links.

Aeon Flux

<http://sunsite.unc.edu/otis/notes/aflux/aeonflux.html>

MTV may be mindless, repetitive and consumerist, but whatever the channel's shortcomings, it has commissioned some extraordinary animations.

The MTV toon that everyone knows is the hyper-ironic, ultra-cool *Beavis & Butt-head*, who are good enough reasons to have a dustbin lid nailed to your chimney on their own.

Before *B&B* there was *Liquid Television*, a showcase of animation hotshots from around the world, and the best part of *Liquid Television* was *Aeon Flux*.

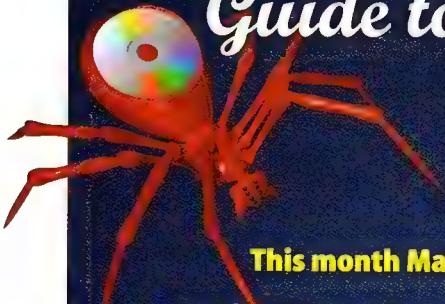
Aeon Flux was spun off on its own and is now one of the cultiest of cult things. It has an enigmatic plot, a super-foxy enigmatic heroine (Flux herself), and a disturbing obsession for things crawling across people's eyes.

Flux lives in a future world of pure paranoia: she is on a mission, she is living dangerously, her enemies are everywhere – but no-one ever satisfactorily explains why. This fan-made site makes a decent fist of it, but leaves enough unexplained to keep the mystique going.





The Webcrawler's Guide to...



MUSIC



This month Mat Toor and his modem go rockin' all over the world to find out the answers to some crucial music-related questions. Will Internet kill the video star? What have the Human League been doing since 1981? And what exactly is the third chord to Elvis

Costello's Alison...?

Music and the Internet. On paper they are unlikely bedfellows. The problems are twofold. The first, as usual, is bandwidth. Digital samples of songs can be big beasties – for instance, the Internet Underground Music Archive's offerings range from 1.5Mb to 5Mb in size – so the click and wait involved in downloading and replaying a track can be mighty frustrating to a generation reared on the instant track access of CD.

Secondly, there is the thorny subject of copyright. 'Official' Web sites are sponsored or run by the record labels themselves who would die before they put songs in their entirety on the Net, free for any spod with a modem and plenty of spare time. Instead you get snippets of tracks, around 20 or 30 seconds, usually encoded at a crunchy 11.1kHz. Believe me, such 'freebies' soon lose their novelty after a few downloads.

But don't take my word for it. Check out the sites for yourselves. Brits are relatively well served by the Musicbase site (<http://www.musicbase.co.uk/musician>) – official Web presence – it's even got the blessing of the notoriously technophobic MCPS. This offers the usual round-up of piccies, propaganda and promo clips. Among the artists featured are Pop Will Eat Itself, The Stone Roses and, er, The Human League. The last act is graced by possibly the most unappealing hot link ever written: "Background: Find out what the Human League have been up to during the last 15 years." (... if you really must know) No ta. Musicbase is a competent, if not particularly exciting, piece of Web architecture which suffers from a relative paucity of content.

A similarly modest site has been served up by Geffen/DCG Records (<http://www.geffen.com>), although it's still very much a work in progress. At the moment it's a no-frills showcase for a pretty starry line-up, including Nirvana, Sonic Youth, Hole, Veruca Salt and our very own Peter Gabriel. What do you get?

The usual suspects: JPEG photos, artist biogs, bite-sized audio files (around 200K) and some tour dates if you're lucky. True, it's not going to set the world on fire at the moment, but David Geffen has a reputation as an innovator (he's just set up a new Hollywood studio with Steven Spielberg, after all) so this could be a site worth watching closely.

A much bigger on-line presence is provided by the electronics and media giant Sony, which recently set up its own cluster of Web resources called, imaginatively, Sony OnLine (<http://www.sony.com>). Within this home page are sub-directories for various Sony operations, including a site devoted to the company's record labels Columbia and Epic.

The entire operation has money and effort stamped all over it: it's full of polished imagedaps (pictures that have embedded hot links), runs on a powerful server and provides high quality (sampled at 22.1 kHz) audio clips in a bewildering smorgasbord of readable formats. There is also a useful database – the Vault – which lists every album that Sony has ever released, complete with catalogue number. Have I ever used it? No, but it seems like a good idea and certainly creates the impression that this is a genuine resource rather than an extended piece of on-line promotion.

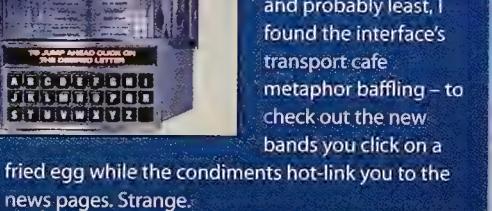
So what's my beef? Well, although it looks good and has more bells and whistles than a herd of bovine football refs, it's still slightly cumbersome. Too many pages have data heavy (100-150K) front ends which foster frustration, while once again you pay a price in download time for the quality of the audio clips (typically around 850K per sample). Last



City Rollers being moderated by Black Flag



City Rollers being moderated by Black Flag



and probably least, I found the interface's transport cafe metaphor baffling – to check out the new bands you click on a fried egg while the condiments hot-link you to the news pages. Strange.

Another big budget commercial Web site has been established by rival record company MCA, but it has taken a rather different approach. It has created an 'on line magazine' called AMP (http://www.mca.com/mca_records/index.html) which attempts to be a quasi-independent publication rather than a corporate appendage. Issue 2 has an excellent interview with Quentin Tarantino (is there anywhere on the Web free of this man's influence?) explaining the way he integrates soundtracks into



his movies, the usual mix of music-related features and news – including the revelation that former hardcore porn star Traci Lords was to release an album on

Valentine's Day – plus a truckload of audio and video clips.

AMP is an accomplished product, and thankfully not too cumbersome even when accessed with a V.32 modem. My only caveat is that the line-up of artists in this particular edition is not that inspiring: The Who,

Boston and Gladys Knight are not going to keep me glued to my PC into the wee small hours, but then one man's nadir is another's Nirvana...

One short step away from the official commercial Web sites is the Internet Underground

Music Archive (http://iuma.southern.com/IUMA/index_graphic.html).

Described by its creators as "a working prototype of how

people will

variety of music, there's no way you can be sure that you're going to like what you hear.

One day, sites like IUMA will provide a genuine alternative to radio – and perhaps even the record companies. That day will come when there's enough bandwidth to allow mug punters like me to dial in, click on a hot spot and hear a song or watch a video instantly. Until then, the IUMA will always be promising more than it can deliver.

One step removed from the official record company Web sites are the countless numbers of unauthorised on-line fanzines devoted to specific artists. Dedicated fans turn their PCs into Web sites devoted to their chosen rock God or Goddess and the end results can often be more useful and informative than the official sources – if indeed, such sources exist at all. A typical example of this type of cyberhomage is NIN (<http://www.scri.fsu.edu/~patters/nin.html>), which a certain Jason Patterson has set up as a tribute to the US 'industrial rock' group, Nine Inch Nails.

Here you'll find a complete set of lyrics – useful given lead singer Trent Reznor's er, unique, vocal style, GIFs of all the album covers, stacks of photos of the band at work and more than 15Mb of audio files – along with the applications you need to play them.

There are also guitar tablature (the 'language' used to tell budding axe heroes where to put their pinkies) and transcripts of some of the band's biggest hits. It's a frighteningly organised piece of on-line publishing, which has been rewarded by regular patronage from Nine Inch Nestsurfers: more than 50,000 people have already logged on and that number is increasing at a rate of one every 15 seconds.

If NIN aren't your cup of tea then simply point your browser at one of the various Web search engines like Lycos (<http://lycos.cs.cmu.edu/>), enter the name of your fave band and submit it to the number cruncher and see what URLs pop out.

For me, assets like guitar notations are far more useful, so I recommend The Guitar World On the Internet (<http://colargol.edb.tih.no/~dagr/Gitar.htm>). This provides a gateway to all kinds of classical, rock and flamenco guitar-related fun, from on-line lessons (<http://ftp.netcom.com/pub/jcarson/guitar/lessons.html>) to an exhaustive guitar tablature database of just about every pop song ever written (<http://unix.hensa.ac.uk/pub/uunet/doc/music/guitar/>). It was here that I ended over 10 years of fret-busting frustration and discovered the elusive third chord to Elvis Costello's bilious love song Alison: A flat minor seventh suspended. How am I supposed to play that at the fag end of a heavy party with one leery eye on the available talent?

But then Declan P McManus was always a bit of a smartarse.

OTHER HAPPENING MUSIC SITES



Yahoo

Great name (it stands for Yet Another Hierarchically Organised Oracle!) for a great site. It's basically a massive but very easy to use database of all sorts of World Wide Web material. I've provided the URL to the music sub-directory, which contains over 50 pointers to topics as diverse as Christian, Industrial, C&W, Studio Technology, Record Labels, Charts and on and on. Many of those hot links have further entries, so it's a literal tidal wave of Web surfing on offer. Brilliantly presented and fantastically useful.

<http://akebono.stanford.edu/yahoo/Entertainment/Music/>

CD Now!

Tired of paying through the nose for audio CDs? Well, fret no more, now you can take advantage of those lower US prices by shopping on-line. CD Now! describes itself as the "world's largest record store". With over 100,000 titles on CD, MiniDisc and cassette it's hard to argue with that claim. You can order via fax, phone or PGP encrypted e-mail (they provide the details) and prices start from around \$7, with typical chart CDs tagged at \$12.99. On top of that, UK punters have to add \$12.99 P&P for the first three discs, \$1.99 for the next three and \$1.50 per disc after that. If you've got the money to buy in bulk then you could save a lot of dosh, plus there are stacks of rare and imported titles on the stores database.

<http://cdnow.com/>

The Rolling Stones Web Site

Despite a combined age stretching past the two-century mark, the Rolling Stones have embraced the Web with a vengeance. This quasi-official site (its curators have been given special access to, if not money from, the band) is almost an on-line reflection of the group's on-stage excesses. Big is beautiful in the world of the Stones, and you don't get much bigger than a 42Mb MPEG movie of 'You Can't Always Get What You Want'. I reckon that beaut would take me the best part of 10 hours to download, and although it does have 320 by 240 resolution, there's absolutely no sound! Crazy guys.

But there's plenty of other stuff here to keep Stones fans' pheromones pumping, from an on-line catalogue of official merchandise to exclusive scans of Ron Wood's backstage Polaroids (ooh, painful).

Best of all, is the exhaustive collection of in-ear-face Tongue logos, available in four sizes: small, medium, large and ginormous. Rock-'n'-roll will never be the same again...

<http://stones.com/>

INSIDE THIS SECTION

In this section we review the best of the current crop of CD-ROM shoot-'em-ups, simulations, adventures and strategy games and expose the shamelessly hyped. The emphasis is on original titles, developed specifically for CD-ROM, but we'll also keep you posted on classic floppy-based games that have successfully made the transition to CD, as well as golden oldies that have achieved the status of multiple platform classics.

Rating Each game is rated out of five for its playability and use of multimedia, using the toolbar below. Our team of reviewers is one of the most experienced in the CD-ROM games market, but when using a review to buy games, remember that leisure software, like tank tops, is a matter of highly personal taste.



Platform

MAC MPC CD-i 3DO
The hardware on which the title plays is indicated by the display panel above.

Requirements Special hardware requirements are laid out in the verdict box of each respective review. If there are no requirements listed, you can safely assume that the game can be played on the current entry-level machine on each of the supported platforms. These are:

MAC An LC with 4Mb RAM, a CD-ROM drive and a 256-colour 13/14in monitor.

MPC A 25MHz 386 PC with 4Mb RAM, Windows 3.1, a sound card, a VGA monitor and a double-speed CD-ROM drive.

CD-i The CD-i 210 base unit.

3DO The 3DO base unit.

Arcade



Arcade

Oh shit! It's a
Dark Trooper.

DARK FORCES

Everything you wanted to know about the most eagerly awaited PC game ever with no *Star Wars* clichés, and no mentions of *Doom* guaranteed (maybe)



Doom. There, I've said it. Sorry, but there's no way that comparisons can be avoided when looking at Dark Forces. Doom and its sequel are the PC games, and every title in the genre ultimately has to be judged against them.

In the 15 months that have passed since the release of the original Doom, a huge number of imitations (read, 'rip-offs') have appeared. Problem is, almost without exception, the designers have completely missed the point. Most PC owners don't want more of the same, what we want is Doom and then some. What we need is a game which is to Doom what Doom was to Wolfenstein 3D and any other action game which came before.

Fifteen minutes of playing – enough time to complete the tiny first level – and it's obvious that Dark Forces isn't the game which offers that technological leap. Sure, the game engine enables the user to look up and down but that's also a feature in Id Software's Heretic, and, yes, you can even crouch or jump, but these functions, initially at least, appear totally superfluous.

Give it an hour or so, though, and you'd better call the office and tell them you won't be in for a few days. Make no mistake, Dark Forces will grab you by the throat and refuse to let go.

Morf Rebus, Imperial weapons engineer, inhibited by an inability to leave that chair.

Dark Forces is the latest in a long line of *Star Wars*-inspired games from LucasArts. You play Commander Kyle Katarn, a mercenary employed by the Rebel Alliance's covert intelligence team, who embarks on a series of solo missions. The first (which you'll find in the demo on this month's cover disc) is immediately recognisable – steal the Death Star plans and get out as soon as you can. But thereafter you're working towards one specific goal – find and destroy the Dark Troopers, a new breed of super Stormtrooper, which are heavily

armed, heavily armoured and equipped with jetpacks.

Completing each mission gives the Rebel Alliance more clues on the capabilities and whereabouts of the Dark Troopers. You may, for example, have to find the remains of a Dark



So, how do you guys go to the toilet then?

Trooper weapon, return to your ship, set some explosives and get out sharpish, or find a particular person to winkle out information from. But, things aren't as simple as they sound. On the way to completing each mission you might also need to fire at panels, find coloured keys or code letters, or set off a sequence of events to unlock doors to vital passages. And that's just for starters.



Deep chasms are a key feature in Dark Forces.

Off on a slight tangent here, you begin each mission having just exited your starfighter. Not in an animation as you might expect, but actually in the main environment. In other words, you can run around whether the polygon-generated craft is taking off, landing or waiting for you. Not impressed? You have to see it to appreciate it I guess. (The TIE Fighters have to be seen to be believed.)

Revealing too much of the plot will ruin it for potential buyers – suffice it to say that after battling through various terrains and beating off the prototype Dark Troopers, you'll end up on a spacecraft called the Arc Hammer in the last of the 14 missions, where you finally get the chance to wipe out the Dark Troopers.

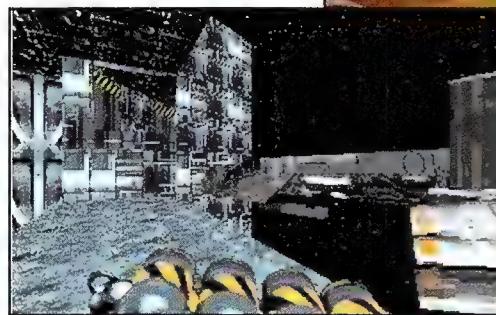
The strong storyline is a major difference from the blast-everything-in-sight monsterfest of *Doom*, and the inclusion of superb animated cut sequences between each mission keeps the story ticking along nicely. As with all previous *Star Wars* games, everything ties in perfectly with the original stories, so don't expect the chance to kill Luke Skywalker. In fact, none of the main film characters feature, aside from Darth Vader who pops up regularly in the cut scenes, and Jabba the Hutt who appears in a video sequence.

What you do get are hundreds of Stormtroopers to blast and a variety of bit-players including Imperial Commanders, Gamorrean Guards, Star Destroyer Commanders, Imperial Torture Droids, those 'boggle-eyed swamp creature things', and, er ... look I don't know all their names, okay?

Possibly the biggest improvement over *Doom* is the way the levels are constructed. Although multi-levelled buildings were a feature in *Doom*, the game engine did not allow for rooms built on top of other rooms. It sounds a minor limitation, but *Dark Forces*, which doesn't suffer from the same problem, shows the major handicap it was. Here, not only are most of the levels a lot larger than those in *Doom*, the architecture is vastly more complex. Buildings are often several stories high, caverns many levels deep. There are floating walkways, huge lifts, giant moving structures, and much more besides, making the whole environment seem much more, dare I say it,



Hello, fellas, can you tell me the way to... Ah.



Some missions are in space. Here, your craft awaits while you run around aimlessly for a few hours.



Well now, you're a cutie pie, aren't you?



Kaboom! Eat that, mister (above). Hang on, Jabba (right), didn't you die in Return of the Jedi?

CHEAT SHEET

DARK FORCES

- Ammo conservation is vital – don't waste it. If confronted with a group of Stormtroopers, for example, don't blast them individually, throw a grenade in the middle of them. Also, try not to shoot the enemy if you are not in a position to pick up the ammo they drop.
- Obvious this one, but use the bloody map! You can have it displayed over the playing screen and although this is confusing at first, you'll soon get to used to it being there.
- If you're confronted by a door with a code lock which you don't have – guess it! Trying all the combinations only takes a couple of minutes.
- A crack in the wall normally means there's a secret room behind – use the grenades to get in. Some secrets aren't quite so obvious, though.

interactive.

When you find yourself in a complex area you'll learn to use the look up and down facilities before you leap, as you lose energy (thus risking a life) if you fall too far. At times you're forced to crouch to get through small gaps, and running jumps across platforms are often essential, so it becomes clear that those extra moves weren't included for show. In fact, at times *Dark Forces* feels like a 3D platform game or even a 3D adventure, as much as a 3D shoot-'em-up.

What I particularly like is the variation in the settings for each mission – you'll find yourself in swamplands, mining territories, icy wastelands, spaceships and more. You'll also come across specific features which aren't repeated – from gas chambers to giant rotating mining drills, right down to simple graphic details. And the variety keeps it all fresh and exciting.

Talking of things exciting (nice Radio 2-style link there, eh?), the weapons certainly don't disappoint, although don't expect a Light Sabre – you're not a Jedi Knight, you know. You start the game with a simple pistol, but it's not long before you'll be able to grab a Stormtrooper rifle, and then Thermal Detonators (grenades) which are pretty much essential for making holes in walls to find secret rooms.

These basic weapons aren't very accurate, but later you'll find more advanced weaponry including mines, repeater and concussion rifles, a mortar gun, and the highly powerful cannons used by the Dark Troopers.

Many have dual functionality: press the standard fire button to release a grenade, for instance (the longer you depress the button the further it goes), and it'll explode on impact, but hit the alternative fire button and it bounces around for three seconds (literally) before exploding.

As you would expect, LucasArts has the weapon noises down to a fine art, but the special effects on some levels – such as howling winds, rushing water and moving machinery – are excellent, too. As in fact is the





Arcade



One of the Dark Troopers – huh, not so hard after all.

 context-sensitive soundtrack, but unless you have a MIDI-compatible sound card, you're definitely not going to hear the music at its best.

A really neat touch is the narrative and the (pre-determined) radio conversations between yourself and base – there should have been more of both. Conversely, the shouts from the Imperial forces – "There he is!" "Stop, Rebel scum!" "Surrender immediately!" "You're in violation of Imperial law" – can't fail to impress, but after you've heard them for the thousandth time...

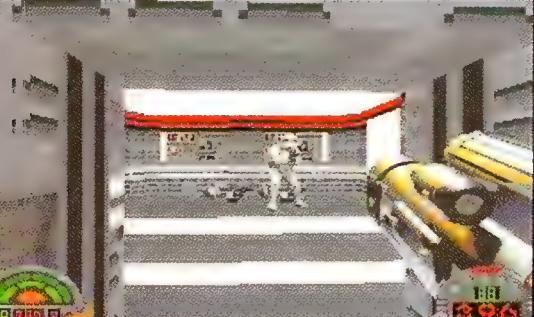
Blimey, I'm finding negative points now, aren't I? Well, yes, brilliant though Dark Forces is, it's not perfect. One of the biggest faults is that there's no way of knowing how much of a level you've seen. Like Doom, the maps only show areas which have been explored. This is no bad thing. The problem is that you're not given a completion or 'secrets revealed' score when the objective is fulfilled – you could have missed something and you'll never know.

Also, the variation in mission objectives, rather than the usual 'find the exit' scenario is a great feature, but when you find a person as asked, you would at least expect them to move, wouldn't you? Here, they're not remotely animated, and sadly the missions end there and then. It would have been cool if you had to escort them back to your starfighter.

The enemy characters – especially the Dark Troopers – are very well drawn, and



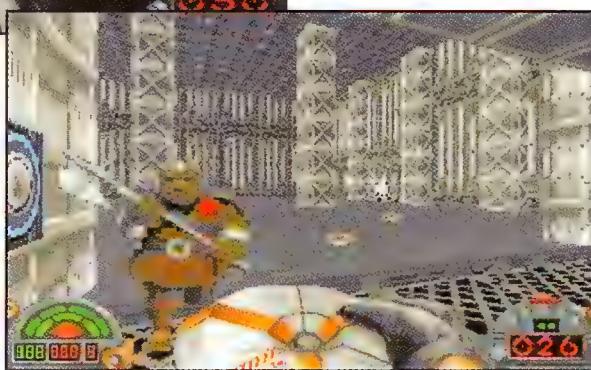
Place proximity mines. Hide in the corner. Laugh as enemies disappear into thin air.



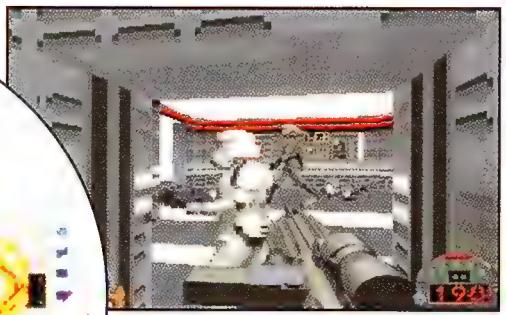
See this, Mr Stormtrooper? It's a canon I nicked off one of your mates.



Watch your head now.



Following the disbanding of Take That, Robbie pursues a new career as Gamorrean Guard.



Ah-hum. Excuse me. Hello. Oh, sod you, then – you're dead.



Come and have a go if you think ya hard enough.

the animation is spot on, too. Particularly good is the way Stormtroopers and the like fall back when hit, and fly in the air when blown up. Shame, then, that the enemy seems devoid of any sort of intelligence. It's sometimes possible to open doors directly behind Stormtroopers and they still won't turn around until you fire at them. Doh! And all too rarely do they follow you through doors.

The most intelligent enemy would have been human, but sadly



The cut-sequences are excellent, but you'll have to finish to see this one.



As it happens, Darth turns out to be Kyle's auntie. Or something.

As a result, it's not just the Star Wars fan's Doom, it's the thinking man's Doom.



| |
|--|
| DARK FORCES |
| Special Requirements |
| 8Mb RAM, 33MHz recommended |
| Price £49.99 (inc VAT) |
| Contact Virgin 0181 960 2255 |
| Platform MAC/MPC/CD-I/3DO |

LucasArts has denied you the chance to take on a friend over a network or via modem – Dark Forces is one-player only. Still, I'm not convinced that the game as it stands would be suitable for multi-player games – the levels are too complex, and as I said before, this is as much of an adventure as a blast.

Don't let the minor negative points and lack of multi-player options put you off, however. Doom and Doom II remain the best games of their type if you want to play against friends, but for the soloist this game beats them both hands down.

Dark Forces is more than just a blast – which sets it apart from its rivals.

Warren Chrimson



Okay, Gametek let's see ya do Countdown next. And we want Richard Whatsisface.

FAMILY FEUD

"In our survey we asked 100 people to name their favourite TV quiz show. You said 'Family Fortunes'. Our survey said... ur-ur!"

A totally fictitious scenario, of course. I mean, who doesn't like *Family Fortunes*? For me, it's Les Dennis who makes it – he's brilliant. The way he comes up with spontaneous jokes about the members of each family, the gags about their names – top stuff. I mean, that's clever isn't it?

Anyway, *Family Feud* is what the Americans call it, and they may offer bigger cash prizes over the pond, but they ain't got our Les. Which means no Les in this US game conversion. Major disaster.

The format of this 3DO title is basically the same as the UK show. Two families answer 'social' questions in the hope that their responses match those of the general public, polled in pre-show surveys.

The nerve-jangling big money round for the winning family is still there at the end,



"Name something people wear for protection?" Er... a condom?



Despite the US theme, the game was made in the UK. All the highest scoring families are from soap operas. Weird.

and there are even bonus cash rounds to get through before you get into the proper game.

As you might expect, you can play the game against the computer, but it's when you play against a friend that the game really comes into its own. *Family Feud* is so crap, it's brilliant.

You see, many of the 4,000 questions have an American bias and, of course, all the surveys have been conducted in the US. So, rather than choosing the obvious answers, you have to squeeze into an American's mind and predict what they might have said.

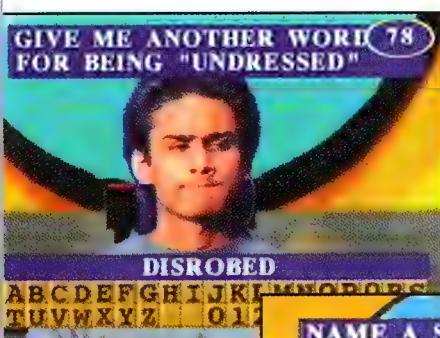
"Name a sport played on grass?" my partner was asked. She guessed that (American) Football was top answer, but she didn't think of Croquet which was in second place on the board. Oddly, she didn't guess that Tag or Frisbee would be there either. Game to me – excellent!

Okay, so the presentation is questionable – the digitised characters look like complete loons and there's hardly any animation. And yes, spelling each of the answers letter by letter can become monotonous. But hey, the sets are so similar you can pretend you're on the show! Up to ten players can participate! You can personalise the families' names, interests and personalities to match yours! It's suitable for kids of all ages! It's *Family Fortunes*!

Alright, so it's not for everyone – *Family Feud* is really a cult game. All that's missing is a cult like Les Dennis to present it.



I'm sure I know this bloke. Pretend you or a friend are on the show.



You'll have to squeeze into the naked stupidity of contestants' minds to win.



"Do you want to play or pass?" I'll play but where's our Les?"

FAMILY FEUD
Price £39.99 (inc VAT)
Contact Gametek
01753 553445
Platform MAC MPC CD-i 3DO



Warren Christmas

Arcade



FLIGHT UNLIMITED

You might think a single-player one-plane-at-a-time flight sim is a crashing bore, but Flight Unlimited is so involving and realistic that it's actually a smashing soar

Flight Unlimited is a single-player, single-aircraft (at a time) flight simulator. The operative word here is 'simulator'. There is no combat because there are no other aircraft with which to interact. All you do is take off, fly and land (or crash, depending on your ability). You may think this is about as exciting as listening to paint dry. And, in normal circumstances, you would probably be right. Flight Unlimited, however, changes the rules slightly. Once you have seen it running, you will understand when I say that the circumstances become anything but normal.

Flight Unlimited is what you might call a fifth-generation flight simulator. Although the choice of aircraft is limited to four single-engine propeller-driven machines plus a glider, and the world area with which you can play is limited, the flight model and graphics conspire to lift this head and shoulders (*surely fuselage and wingtips? – Ed.*) above everything else around.

To all intents and purposes, you find yourself flying within a fully digitised 3D world. Now that may not sound much, but look at the screen shots to see what I mean. The world is, as we all know, a beautiful place. Now it is possible to see that from within a simulator. No more blocky rotating bitmaps or triangular hills. This is photo quality scenery. Possibly even better than Magic Carpet.

All this splendour is allied to brilliantly presented aircraft which look just right. But the crowning glory is the flight model. I'm not exaggerating when I say that Flight Unlimited uses as much processing power to handle the behaviour of the air as most simulators use in total. Unlike pretty well all other sims of this genre, Flight Unlimited treats air as a fluid medium, with associated dynamic complications.

That means that you are vulnerable to propeller wash,



Forget blocky rotating bitmaps or triangular hills – now the detail is so realistic you can even see our office...



Watch out for clear air turbulence as you enter this valley – how simulating!



You're really going to need those dials – Flight Unlimited treats air like a fluid medium so you'll need to bone up on aerodynamics!



You might need to pull on some thermals in this glider sim.

windshear, thermals, clear air turbulence and all those other arcane aviation terms you hear on the news but never really understand. Let me put it more simply. I'm a pilot (*no, really he is – Ed.*). I love flight sims and this is the first time I can honestly say there are no significant problems with the way this game flies, outside of the physical limitations placed on it by the fact that it's not the real thing.

Now we've all seen games which look fantastic but have all the long-term attraction of, well, something really not very attractive. We've also seen games which have no spectacular graphics but which play so well that we've still got them loaded (like Red Baron, for example). There are a few which combine the worst of both worlds.



But recently there have been a couple of really nice games which both look good and play well. Flight Unlimited is the next step up. It looks great and plays marvellously.

Of course, there has to be a down side to all this wonderfulness. Don't

even think of buying this game unless you either have a DX2/66 with 8Mb minimum or an enormous amount of patience. For anything approaching a good experience here, you need a Pentium with 16Mb and a good fast CD-ROM drive. You also need a really hot video card – VESA Local Bus or PCI preferably. Then the results are truly awesome.

From the ground buildings where you start to the really intense effort of trying to fly a perfect Cuban Eight, Flight Unlimited just oozes quality and atmosphere. With a good spec machine, everything is smooth and, for want of a better word, seamless. With a bottom end machine (and by that I mean a DX/2), things start to get rather unsatisfying. Although the overall effect is still fairly smooth, the detail levels have to be turned right down and everything becomes slow. Although a couple of years ago, I would have said that this was acceptable, I've been spoilt by progress.

One of the features of Flight Unlimited is the flying instructor who joins you in the aircraft. Unlike pretty well anything I've seen with an instructor involved, the advice and instruction you get are actually useful. Not only that, but there is a level of artificial intelligence built in that makes the whole experience far more involving. For example, in certain other sims I could mention, your instructor will give you generic sort of advice which will be repeated for a dozen different things. Here, your advice is specific. You get into a spin and the instructor will advise you on recovery as needed.

Next time, he may leave you to get on with it until you make a mistake. So you pull back on the stick (*big mistake*) and he'll say: "No, try pushing forwards instead." This is the sort of behaviour you expect from a real instructor, and it all adds to the experience instead of being an irritation. Virgin claims that Flight

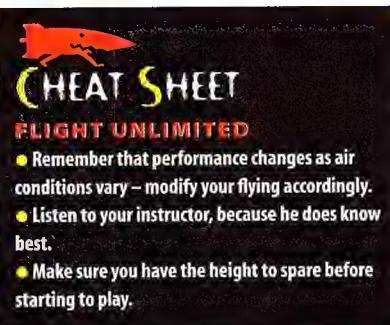
Unlimited could actually reduce the number of hours needed to obtain a pilot's licence. Although I have reservations about the wisdom of this, I suspect that the claim may well be true.

To sum up, not only is this an attractive package, with excellent graphics and sound, but it has bags of depth and atmosphere as well. This is a refreshing change, and Flight Unlimited deserves to do well because of it.

Developer Looking Glass is likely to release a sequel later in the year which is set to include combat options and network play, and this is sure to be an even bigger hit. For now, though, Flight Unlimited does just fine. Just make sure you've got the hardware to run it.



Simon Bradley



Believe it or not, this is their private suite on the Orient Express.

THE BIG RED ADVENTURE

We call this game BRA for short – mountains of goodies kept from you by flimsy presentation

Some adventure games like System Shock really show what can be done with this tried and tested formula by adding 3D. Others like The Big Red Adventure play it safe and deliver more of the same.

From a small Italian developer, Dynabyte, comes a sequel to the little heard of Nippon Safes Inc and features the same three anti-heroes: Doug, a nerdy computer boffin and would-be thief, who has to rob a museum; Dino, an enormous gorilla of a man with the intelligence of a pea, who has to find his way home; and Donna, who is an ex-stripper trying to cover up her past and not bothering to cover much else.

All are mixed up in a dastardly but feeble plot to re-instate communism in Mother Russia – believe it or not, the Marx brothers kidnap Donna for a virgin sacrifice which they hope will bring Lenin back from the dead.

Dynabyte has opted for four episodes of play, and to vary the gameplay you can change between each



Pravda means truth, and the truth is this game isn't good...

characters in the two episodes where all three are featured. In between each

THE BIG RED ADVENTURE
Price £39.99 (inc VAT)
Contact Core Design
01332 297797
Platform MAC MPC CD-i 3DO

The graphics are all rendered in SVGA which does set it apart from some of its ilk, but can often look a bit barren given the occasional low level of detail at high resolution. Each character carries out obligatory moves when idle, but apart from this, background animation is very basic.

So once again, we find another basically floppy disk game being marketed as a CD-ROM product. Don't be fooled, there are no extras with this CD package, such as speech or extra animation. The only bonus is that it doesn't take up valuable hard disk space.



Gareth Ramsay

m²

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|---|---------|
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Age of



The King has torn down the land's essential defences, the citadels.



Ah, don't these brontosaurus look cute.



Eloi, an ageing dinosaur recalls his childhood experiences to you, Prince Adam.

LOST EDEN

Journey to a world where dinosaur and humans co-exist in an uneasy harmony. Discover why and defeat the evil Tyranns

If you're an adventure game fanatic who likes nothing more than a good, challenging, puzzle-filled adventure (like Monkey Island 2, or Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis), you may as well stop reading here. There are plenty of puzzles to be solved in Lost Eden, but you'd have to be a complete airhead to get seriously stuck on any of them.

Even if you do get stuck, all you have to do is to keep talking to all the characters in the game, and someone will tell you what to do next. The game even has a sort of on-line help feature, which you invoke by summoning up a particular character who will tell you how to get out of whatever tricky situation you're in.

So what's the point in playing an adventure game that doesn't challenge you in any way and takes you by the hand through the whole affair? To answer that question, you first have to get the idea out of your head that you are playing an adventure game at all. Try to think of it as an 'interactive story' rather than a game and you may well surprise yourself by becoming deeply engrossed in the whole thing.

There are several reasons for this. The first and most obvious high point in Lost Eden is the quality of the graphics. All the landscapes are stunningly beautiful. The cut-scenes as you move from one location to another are breathtaking. Add to this a superb soundtrack and some amazing sound effects and you have a very atmospheric game. The highlight, though, is not the excellent presentation, but its endearing and captivating plot.



Can you persuade humans and dinosaurs to work together?

The story is told from beginning to end by Eloi, an ageing dinosaur recalling his childhood experiences. He tells the tale of an ancient land inhabited by humans and dinosaurs who live in constant fear of an evil race, the Tyranns. You play Prince Adam, Eloi's companion throughout the game. To rid the land of the evil Tyranns, you must persuade the humans and dinosaurs to work together against the enemy.

You soon discover how humans and dinosaurs built towering citadels which kept the Tyranns at bay. Your own grandfather took a disliking to the citadels and tore them all down. Understandably, this had a rather detrimental effect on human-dinosaur relations, and now

they will hardly even speak to each other, each race wary of the other's motivations.

Your objective is to travel through the various valleys in the land, persuading the humans and dinosaurs in each valley to build citadels to



There's a superb soundtrack to go alongside.



All the landscapes are stunningly beautiful and the cut-scenes as you move from one location to another are simply breathtaking.



defend themselves against the Tyranns, ultimately seeing off the Tyranns' leader, Moorcus Rex. Securing each valley is a three-step process. First, you need to persuade the worker dinosaurs in the valley to build a basic citadel. You have to give them a gift before they will co-operate. Once the basic citadel has been built, you need the aid of a Triceratops to turn it into a towering fortress. They also require a specific gift before they will help. Finally, you need to persuade the warrior dinosaurs to see off the Tyranns in the valley.

When you first get to the citadel building stage, the game lulls you into a false sense of security. I thought things were going to take off at this point. This is a game from French developer Cryo, creator of the classic Dune adventure/strategy game, and the citadel building element in Lost Eden hinted that there was a strategy element.

Unfortunately, the building process is way too basic and quickly becomes repetitive as you travel from valley to valley performing the

Modes of transport can be a little unusual.

same actions to build another citadel. The lack of a strategy element is a sadly missed opportunity to turn a game, which is very strong on plot and unrivalled in terms of presentation, into an all-time classic. If you've played Dune, imagine playing it again without the strategy sections and you'll get a pretty good idea about Lost Eden.

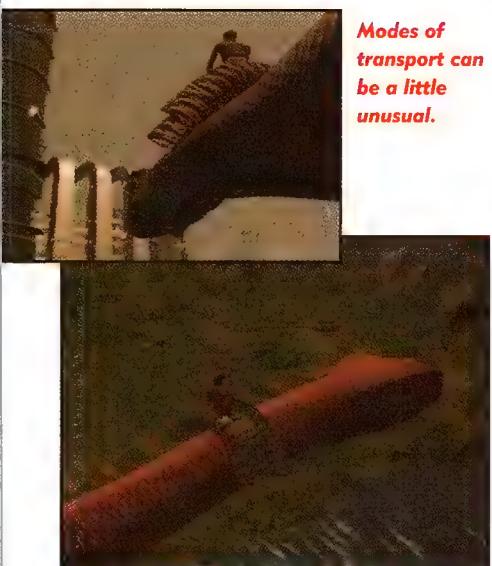
The only point at which the gameplay changes is in a maze section near the end.

You wander through a series of tunnels, getting lost, confused (and eventually irritated) until you come across a magical item. As soon as you've found that, you go through the whole thing again to find your way out. It's almost as though Cryo suddenly realised there wasn't much to do in the game and plonked a maze level in by way of an apology. Incredibly, despite the lack of any real player interaction in the game, I still liked it.

A lot of work has gone into developing the characters in the game and explaining their role in the great scheme of things. In some ways, playing Lost Eden is similar to reading a good book. If you're looking for a conventional adventure game with challenging puzzles and weeks of gameplay, Lost Eden is definitely not for you. It's not so much an adventure game as a multimedia fairytale which you help along by solving some very simple puzzles. Also, the fact that you can complete it in about two days does not exactly make it a value for money

purchase. What it does have in its favour, is superb presentation and an enchanting story line. If you're tempted by the graphics and like the sound of it, try and get a look at it before buying it. Otherwise, don't risk it.

Chris Anderson



An engrossing plot but little game play.



A condom over the head might help, then again...

BUREAU 13

Some speech has been added and there are some new graphics. It's no extravaganza

As CD-ROM releases go, Bureau 13 is another of a growing number of games which see the transition to this newer media as nothing more than the addition of some speech and 'nice' graphics. So it's worth noting that this game is going to be no multimedia extravaganza.

The bizarre plot centres around a secret American government agency whose sole purpose is the tracking down and possible extermination of paranormal or supernatural phenomena, basically *X-Files* stuff. The really strange part is that of your six agents, one is a witch, one a vampire and another a priest whose special ability is that of prayer! When one of your agents goes rogue and tries to assassinate a small town sheriff, your group, or, rather, two of your group investigate.

Up to this point the story is animated in the usual 3D, but from here on in the standard VGA adventure stuff takes over, such as the 'slightly from the air' type view of the screen – all of which was terribly groundbreaking four years ago! The user interface is a very poor point-and-click affair with a pull-down menu thing which takes up half the screen!



Are you sure this was a good place to build an ice skating rink?



Welcome to Dullsville.

done. The 'you find nothing' and 'you can't do that' type statements are supplied by a drole American voice speaking in monotones and trying to crack jokes! Plus, an Irishman in the same league as Dick Van Dyke's Cockney in *Mary Poppins*.

Bureau 13 doesn't break the boundaries of gaming technology, and worst of all, it's littered with annoying bugs. A shame really, because it definitely had potential.

BUREAU 13

Price £39.99 (inc VAT)

Contact Gametek

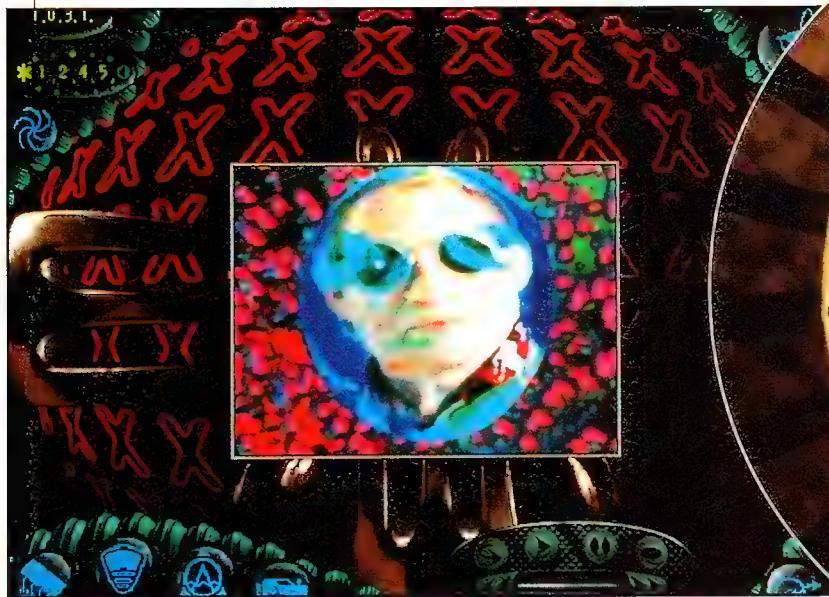
01753 553445

Platform MAC MPC CD-i 3DO



Gareth Ramsey

Arcade



Spenser Amalgam, creature of the Alexandria, hotel guest of your nightmares.



These guys
look after the hotel
lobby, so tip generously.

CLUB DEAD

Is MTV plumbing the depths, or tapping into a rich vein with its first interactive foray?

This CD-ROM is MTV's first foray into the world of interactive entertainment, and from the moment the game begins you're not allowed to forget its pedigree. Club Dead is loud, brash and impossible to ignore – just like the network itself.

Star of the game is Sam Frost, a cyberplumber working at the Hotel Alexandria – a 17-storey monstrosity offering its rich and famous clients an unparalleled experience in virtual reality. 'V', as it's known, is rife in the future and everyone does it – even our hero, who wakes up on the floor of his hotel at the beginning of the game in the throes of a flashback. From this moment on you realise you don't have a clue what's going on. It's a feeling that stays with you throughout. Even discovering that Sam is working undercover doesn't help much.

The first thing to do then, naturally, is explore. In the beginning you have only restricted access so most of the hotel's floors remain elusively out of reach. However, as you progress and talk to people you'll find this access widened, allowing you to explore further afield. Movement between floors is via a lift and each area you visit is presented by means of some beautifully rendered graphics.

Every time you step out of the lift and enter one of these rooms a video clip will play and a scene unfolds, advancing the plot. A

clock at the top of the screen keeps game time and clips can take up anything from five minutes if you're at a dead end, to several hours if something important is happening.

Sam has several secret missions to complete in order to stay alive, but they are so secret he doesn't know what they are. In fact, his brain's so fried he doesn't know much, fullstop. Fortunately, you begin the game with several tools to help you get to grips with what's happening. These include an on-line visual ansafone and an invaluable guide to the hotel, its facilities, guests and staff.

You also have a Personal Data Assistant or PDA which allows you to record and review your daily activities. After going to a room, the PDA will take a visual snapshot of the event which you can download and study at your convenience. Along the way you'll also pick up or be given items of interest. These are stored in a inventory, but you can only use one at a time so it's vital to carry the right one.

The graphics in Club Dead are all superb, from the rendered rooms, through the video clips – which cut and flash in true MTV short-span style – to the various animations that run

throughout. Where the game really scores points, though, is in its sound. The effects are never less than stunning, the voice-overs brilliant and the music blistering. Nine Inch Nails producer Martin Atkins is the man behind the score and from the funky options screen music to the subliminal lift musak, it's faultless.

Club Dead may not be the best game ever – it can get ridiculously difficult and the gameplay really isn't all that involving – but the plot is excellent and whole thing fits together so well that, just for once, it really doesn't matter all that much.



| | |
|------------------|-----------------|
| CLUB DEAD | ... game |
| Price | £TBA |
| Contact | CIC Interactive |
| 0181 563 4013 | |

Platform **MAC MPC CD-i 3DO**

David Williams

CHEAT SHEET

CLUB DEAD

- It's essential to be in the right place at the right time with the right object. Pay close attention to everything as clues are often hidden in conversations or at locations, and save regularly so you can backtrack. You'll need to.

MORTAL KOMBAT II

It's more of the same with this PC beat-'em-up, so if you liked the original, you'll *love* MK II...



It's widely accepted that the original Mortal Kombat (released through Virgin last year) was possibly the best arcade-style beat-'em-up on the PC. Not that it had a lot of competition. Never really a genre in which the PC excelled, the game proved that you could produce a console-style joypad-mangler and actually get away with it.

We now have the sequel in both the arcades and on virtually every home console format in existence (except CD-i and 3DO), and to be quite honest it's, well, what can I say? More of the same.

As you'd expect the graphics are excellent, the digitised sprites all look fab and the animation is top notch. There are some lovely backdrops and, of course, there's the all-important gore. Yep, the stuff that caused all of the fuss among the conscientiously-objecting moral majority last year. Thwack someone in the gob and out gush huge amounts of red gunk which then splatters on the floor. Oh, how controversial and terrible.

To be brutally honest, Mortal Kombat II is fundamentally the same thing all over again. There are some new characters, all with suitably hideous special moves which can cause pain and mass destruction, and there are the much publicised 'fatality' changes which everyone thought were fab in the arcade. You could rip out a guy's spine, set fire to his face, or even blow him a fatal kiss (these were extremely popular with the gutter press). They're now joined by some 'secret, super-special' finishing moves which can turn your opponent into a small child, a 'babality'.



Blood, goo and strangely sloppy substances fly around at regular intervals and are at the heart of the Mortal Kombat controversy.



Alternatively you can become pals in the form of a 'friendship move'. These require an unnervingly complex series of movement wiggles in the form of sequences of kicks and punches and button presses – but the most annoying thing is that none of the bloody things are mentioned in the manual. You know they're there, but you have to work them out for yourself.

It has to be said that this is really quite a smart arcade game for the PC. It manages to match its console counterparts in practically every area. Obviously, the sprite handling isn't as good as on, say, the Sega MegaDrive, but on the whole it is very competent. As to whether it's superior to the original is entirely up to you. This is by no means a grown-up's game, and I can only imagine that the bulk of potential customers will be younger players who don't own consoles, but whose parents own a reasonable quality PC. This kind of punter is obviously totally aware of every tiny little detail that makes it different from its predecessor and will be able to convince you at length why the inclusion of Reptile as a proper character instead of a 'secret one' is of vital importance. Kids, eh?

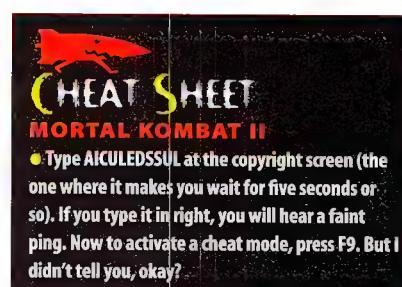
In short, this is one of the best beat-'em-ups around. It's significantly better than *Rise of the Robots* as far as gameplay goes and it looks good. I can't for the life of me work out why it's being released on CD-ROM only though – it doesn't appear to display any unique features that couldn't be featured on a floppy version. Still, it's a great game nonetheless.



The graphics feature digitised actors wearing silly make-up jumping around like complete lunatics. But the effect is actually quite impressive.



John Davidson



CHEAT SHEET

MORTAL KOMBAT II

- Type **AICULEDSSUL** at the copyright screen (the one where it makes you wait for five seconds or so). If you type it in right, you will hear a faint ping. Now to activate a cheat mode, press **F9**. But I didn't tell you, okay?

MORTAL KOMBAT II

Special Requirements

33MHz 486SX

Price £39.99 (inc VAT)

Contact Acclaim

0181 344 5000

Platform MAC MPC CD-i 3DO

Arcade

ATARI PACK FOR WINDOWS

Retro games are certainly in vogue now, but is dredging up 15 ancient Atari VCS 2600 titles taking things just a bit too far? Archaeologists we're not.

When Activision announced that it was going to publish a CD of its top VCS 2600 titles for Windows at the CES in January, much of the 'interactive entertainment' industry paid an inordinate amount of attention. This was mainly because there was no other decent product on show, but partly because it's the largest collection of retro games to be published commercially.

I will admit to approaching the product with a certain amount of trepidation. I'd played many of the originals in their intended manner - sitting on the floor of my parents' front room playing the things with those excellent Atari joysticks and my nose inches away from the TV. OK, I'll admit that retro is certainly 'hip' at the moment, but surely playing the thing in Windows and with a keyboard is going to remove some, if not all, of the enjoyment? All of the games here had their day more than ten years ago and, to be truthful, that's where many of them should have stayed.

If you've only recently discovered what a computer game is, this product is going to mean absolutely nothing. It may have 15 games on it, but unless you've played them before it just isn't worth looking at. If, however, you fall into the category of people who remember the original and either haven't got their VCS anymore or can't be bothered to dig it out of the loft, you'll find a certain degree of enjoyment from sifting through it.

The contents of the disc covers a number of years when Activision was in what many consider its heyday. Kaboom!, Pitfall!, River Raid, Boxing, Chopper Command, Cosmic

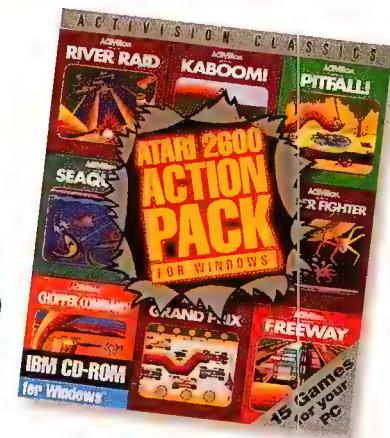


They don't make 'em like River Raid anymore. Thank God.



Pitfalls, where your task is to avoid, er, falling into pits.

Kaboom! For those who like exclamation marks at the end of their game titles.



To liven things up a bit, try putting Roy Schieder on the hook of your friend's line...

Commuter, Crackpots, Fishing Derby, Freeway, Frostbite, Grand Prix, HERO, SeaQuest, Sky Jinks and Spider Fighter make up the full collection, and between them they're probably responsible for generating entire genres of video games.

Cosmic Commuter and Chopper Command are some of the first horizontally scrolling shoot-'em-ups I remember seeing. The two classics HERO and Pitfall! are probably some of the earliest platform games ever dreamt up (and, believe me, you may have fond memories of them, but they're completely bloody boring compared to anything released since), and River Raid and Sky Jinks were almost certainly pioneers in the vertically scrolling shoot-'em-up market. Spider Fighter was, er, 'not very good' - no, oops sorry, a sort of Phoenix type thing, except not as good, and both Frostbite and Freeway are a bit Frogger-y.

What does that leave? Oh yes, Kaboom! and Crackpots which are very similar games involving things dropping from the top of the screen to the bottom. The former involves catching bombs from a frantic looking 'criminal type' resplendent in stripy jersey and silly mask, whilst the latter has you throwing plant pots at spiders which are crawling up



What fifteen games look like on your desktop.



From this simple five-lane freeway, you can progress to Police Stop!



We can be heroes just for one day. You can play HERO for about two minutes.

the screen. That just leaves Boxing which is a top-down beat-'em-up (ish), Grand Prix which hails from the days when racing games were horizontally scrolling affairs and you just had to move up

and down, and Fishing Derby which defies description – it's a fishing game for chissakes!

The fact that the graphics and sound are utterly, utterly 'not very good' is beside the point really. No, my main point is that people will only buy this for nostalgic reasons – and to be honest, a penny short of twenty-five quid is a bit much for something that potentially is only going to entertain you for a very short while. It's brilliant for digging out and showing your old mates and doing the 'Wow! Do you remember this one?' conversation. But, as I discovered, this also soon deteriorates.

ME: 'Remember when we used to play HERO round at your place and your mum used to harp on about doing homework and stuff?'

PAL: 'Yeah – it was brilliant, wasn't it?'

ME: 'Well, I've got it for the PC now – an exact copy.'

The game is then loaded

from Windows – no flashy music, no fanfares. It is, in fact, exactly as we remember.

PAL: 'Wow! What a classic.'

Five minutes of gameplay ensues.

PAL: 'Er, John.'

ME: 'It's crap, isn't it?'

PAL: 'What the hell were we on when we were kids?'

I tried it with a few people, all of whom remember the originals, and the reaction was the same. If you do want to dredge up your video games playing past this is probably the best nostalgia kick you're going to get since Microsoft Arcade came out, but it serves a different purpose to that of a 'game'.

At best it's something you have on your hard drive (despite being on CD it only takes up 6Mb of disk space – and you don't need the disc once you've installed) and play every now and then to alleviate the boredom.

Part of me feels an obligation to give it a good mark because of the pedigree – but, nah, it's a bit boring.



John Davidson



They say starting at the bottom is good for character building.

PREMIER MANAGER 3

Championship Manager it's not, Tactical Manager it's not, a good buy it's not... hm

Despite its title, the main feature of Premier Manager is that you have to start by managing a team from the Vauxhall Conference. So you can forget about leaping right into the Arsenal job.

The only way to get a better team is promotion, when there's a chance you'll be offered a job with another team. Don't get excited, though; they're usually from the Third division, or even worse, back in the Conference. And if you've done your job at all well (which you will have, or you wouldn't have been promoted), this won't be as good as the one you already manage. (You can apply for a job with other teams, but you need a good reputation. If you apply and don't get jobs, your own board starts talking about you behind your back and end up sacking you.)

There's also an unhealthy obsession with sponsorship and ground development. A large amount of time is spent allocating advertising hoardings and improving the ground.

PREMIER MANAGER 3
Price £34.99 (inc VAT)
Contact Gremlin Interactive
01142 753 423
Platform MAC MPC CD-I 3DO



...organising terraces is a test of stamina.



...and it's all just good hard work.

kind of masochist), the game has improved from previous versions.



Patrick McCarthy

Aaaggle

WOODRUFF AND THE SCHNIBBLE OF AZIMUTH

Know what a Schnibble is? Any idea where Azimuth might be found? Animal rights extend to cuddly toys? Thought not

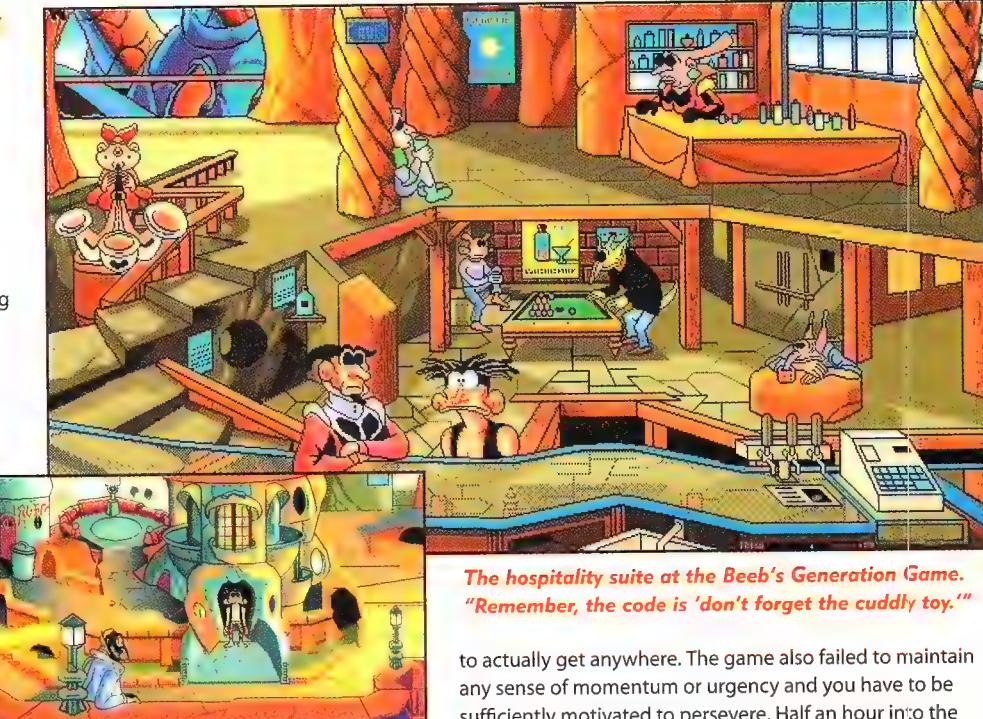
I must admit that the title of this game filled me with a sense of foreboding. Woodruff And The Schnibble Of Azimuth had that ominous ring of an adventure game that was striving to be funny. But putting my misgivings aside, I reconciled myself to the fact that I was Woodruff, a crazy mixed-up Boozook with an abominable taste in trousers.

The game is set in an age where a series of devastating atomic wars has forced the human race to retreat underground. In the meantime, the Boozooks, a peace-loving race with an alarming affection for cuddly toys, have populated Earth and when the humans eventually emerge to reclaim their world, the Boozooks find themselves marginalised.

In a neatly animated intro scene you witness the trashing of a Boozook household where an eminent professor is kidnapped and – unbelievably – a teddy bear is callously murdered. As the game unfolds, you learn that Woodruff was the son of the professor and, as a result of the aforementioned trauma, has suffered a loss of memory. Your task is to help him piece together his past in that time-honoured adventure tradition: by talking to other characters, visiting a myriad locations, collecting objects and using them in a variety of ways to solve the many puzzles.

Inevitably, Woodruff discovers that he's the hero who has to restore the High Council of Seven Boozooks and banish the evil Overlord. But first he faces his most important task: to avenge the killer of his teddy bear (yawn), find his father Professor Azimuth and discover the meaning of the Schnibble.

Although loading the game was fiddly, the interface is very simple to use: a left click on the mouse button will automatically allow you to walk, pick up, use etc, while the right mouse button calls up your inventory. As for the puzzles, these have been reasonably well crafted but the problem-solving often proves more frustrating than fun – it takes far too long



The world is upside down – instead of kicking the door in, this crazy Boozook has kicked it out!

The hospitality suite at the Beeb's Generation Game. "Remember, the code is 'don't forget the cuddly toy.'"

to actually get anywhere. The game also failed to maintain any sense of momentum or urgency and you have to be sufficiently motivated to persevere. Half an hour into the game and I didn't care about Woodruff – even less about his ruddy bear.

Visually, the game can't be faulted. Brought to us by the French team responsible for the Goblins series, and boasting a style of animation inspired by famed cartoon genius Tex Avery, the game looks very polished: lush Super VGA graphics (the game runs under Windows) are the order of the day, housing a wealth of sophisticated animated sequences. But despite the fact I was playing the game on a Pentium, there were still annoying waits between screens.

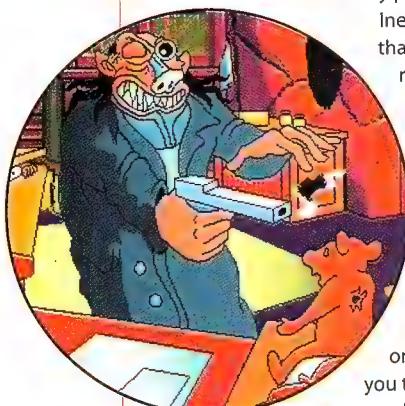
The digitised speech, sound effects and music too, are of a high standard – but the dialogue, so crucial to an adventure game, was unbelievably dull. Which brings us full circle: with the packaging raving on about the "hilarious" graphics, you'd be forgiven for expecting a belly laugh a minute.

But the 'radical' graphic style

combined with the fluffy padded-card school of humour just fuelled my irritation further. It's a shame really because the storyline and cartoony animation would probably go down a treat with younger children – if the puzzles weren't so obscure.

This is a sub-standard Monkey Island – without the humour or inventiveness – and nowadays I expect more for my moolah.

| |
|--|
| WOODRUFF AND THE SCHNIBBLE OF AZIMUTH |
| Special requirements |
| 25MHz 486SX |
| Price £39.99 (inc. VAT) |
| Contact Sierra |
| 01734 303322 |
| Platform: MAC MPC CD-I 3DO |



*Is nothing sacred?
Teddy Kennedy is callously murdered.*



Amaya Lopez

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Thursday 16 - Sunday 19 March 1995, 9.30am - 5.00pm

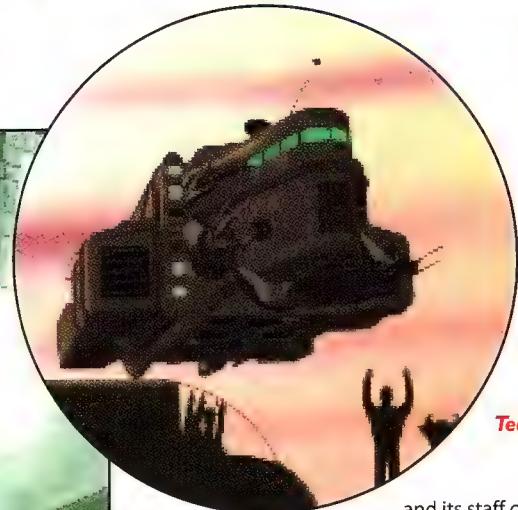
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BLENHEIM

Aaaggle



Jack T Ladd's first task is to discover who nicked the escalator to the bargain basement...



All hail the
Great Gobblin
Teasmade, mix me
a magic brew!

GUILTY

Mea maxima culpa – Psygnosis tries to repeat Innocent Until Caught, in vain

The dreaded curse of sequelitis rears its ugly head as yet another British company tries to 'do a LucasArts' and fails. Step forward Jack T Ladd...

Around this time last year, Psygnosis launched an unassuming little number by the name of *Innocent Until Caught* onto an unsuspecting public. For reasons that still escape me it was generally well received and magazines the length and breadth of Doncaster urged you to buy it.

I remember playing it and wondering what all the fuss was about. Slightly good graphics, a reasonable if immature storyline and puzzles that would keep you happy for an hour or two until your younger brother walked past and showed you how to solve them in that annoyingly condescending way he has.

Now Psygnosis has produced an equally trivial piece of

nonsense whose only advancement through a year of development seems to be a slightly bigger inventory box.

There is the plot, of course, which has the novel twist of being able to be tackled in two different ways, depending on which of the two main characters you choose. Jack T Ladd is your typical roguish criminal type, on the run from the law and determined to stay that way. Ysanne Andropath is the aforementioned law and is determined to stop Jack. Either way, both have to contend with a malevolent parallel dimension whose inhabitants are threatening to take over our own universe, the forces of a crooked casino



These thought bubbles really ruin yer hair do.



I'm Jack, I've got a cow – have I been here before?

another and basic storytelling that would be rejected by *Jackanory* on grounds of juvenility. I never once felt engaged by the on-screen action, and never felt a real urge to complete the puzzles.

Guilty is the kind of adventure that might have rivalled the sort of thing LucasArts was producing a few years ago, but it would still be in the American company's shadow. The lesson is that you have to do more than borrow the look and style of popular games to be successful. Guilty needs more than a few good-looking cut-scenes and some digitised speech to find a favourable sentence. It may have length on its side, but that old saying about giving someone enough rope is all that springs to mind.

CHEAT SHEET

GUILTY

- Don't worry too much about saving the game. Since you can't die, you're never put into a position that you can't escape from. There are no dead ends.
- If you're playing as Jack, start by giving the maintenance droid some work by breaking the light switch.
- If you're controlling Ysanne, you should start by finding a planet with fuel. Talk to the ship's computer for help.

| | |
|---------------|------------------------|
| GUILTY | Price £39.99 (inc VAT) |
| Contact | Psygnosis |
| 0151 709 5755 | |

Platform MAC MPC CD-i 3D



Paul Presley

SUPREME WARRIOR

With its FMV ambitions and Digital Pictures pedigree, this kung fu beat-'em-up meets chop-socky movie ought to be a Shaw thing

Mad Dog McRee meets Street Fighter II: that's the basic premise here. In other words Supreme Warrior is a beat-'em-up presented in FMV, with you taking a first-person perspective view of the proceedings.

If you read last month's feature on Digital Pictures (the company behind the game), then you'll know about the scale of this project. Heaps of cash, location filming at the famous Shaw Brothers studios in Hong Kong, squillions of kung fu experts and fight co-ordinators, and on and on. But what of the actual finished game? After all, following, as it does, in the footsteps of *Night Trap* and *Sewer Shark*, one might expect Supreme Warrior to be a complete and utter load of 'not very good stuff'... a gameplay and enjoyment-free zone.

Amazingly it's actually a bit better than that. Basic plot: you've got to beat up ten people, sequentially. Basic control system: much like Street Fighter II – punches, kicks, blocks and, of course, your special moves. Token chick: the very tasty Vivian Wu (she was in *The Last Emperor*), who grows ever more fond of you as you progress, and who may eventually remove her pants (you know the drill). Token wisened old Chinese person: someone who looks like the bloke with the ping-pong balls over his eyes from the TV series *Kung Fu* – he talks to you *telepathically* when you're fighting, giving hints and suchlike. Interlinking movie bits: brilliantly cheesy chop-sockey fare which, for an added hoot, can be switched aurally between English and Cantonese at the press of a button.



Get past Cantona and Jones and you get to meet the deadly Paul Ince (above). I'll punch the first kung fu cur who comes near my breasts (left).

"Hyeeeaaa, ho ky-aaa... hanny-o tawakaaa!" Translation: "Your breath smells like... a thousand turtles!"

And all these things may be good and well, but obviously the crunch comes when we look at the actual FMV 'fighty' bits. So? Well, they're not half as limiting as you'd imagine. The fact that you can only successfully 'hit' your opponent if the relevant alternative video-stream exists is counterbalanced somewhat by the fact that these alternative video-streams are numerous... and load in quicker than the wink of a bat's eye.

All in all Supreme Warrior, as a novelty item, is well worth seeing. But is it worth buying? Er, not really. It's all very slick, bloody hard to boot – meaning most people will never find out whether Vivian Wu gets her breasts out. Ultimately it will only appeal if you're an unsophisticated beat-'em-up fanatic with a photographic memory, or a tenacious 12-year-old who's ignored the ridiculous 17+ age tag. Perhaps 100 percent video footage isn't the way forward with computer games, no matter what the people at Digital Pictures would have us believe.

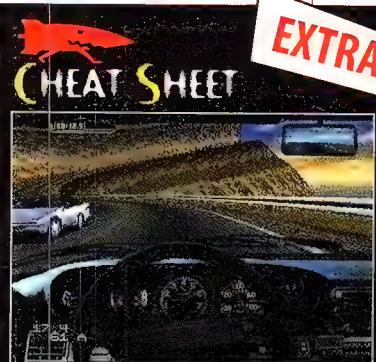


Rub Deep Heat on your genitals, Algipan in the whip scars on your back, toothpaste in your eyes. OK? Right, you're fired!



Duncan McDonald

EXTRA

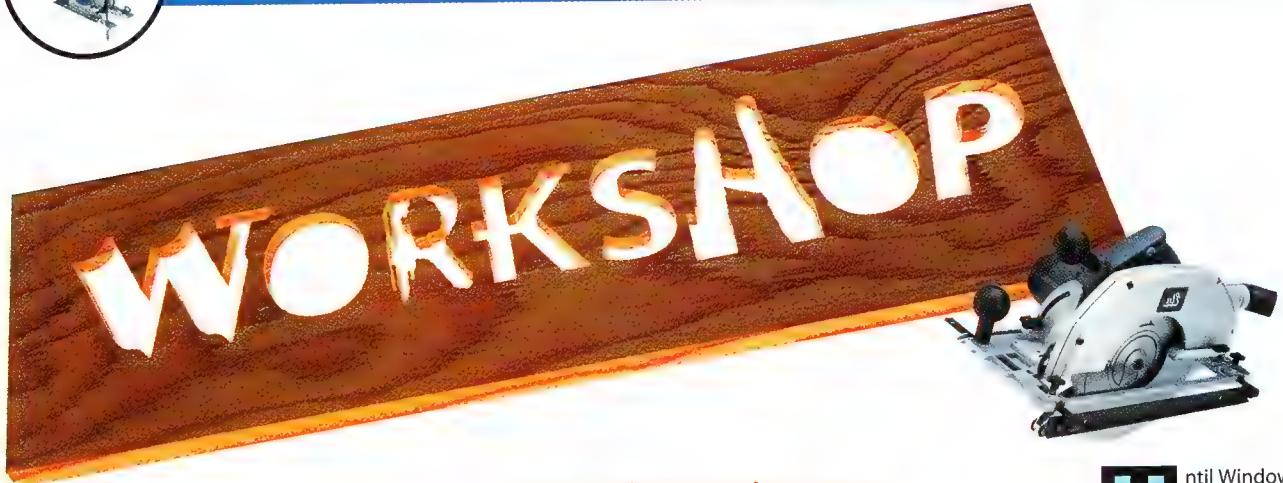


THE NEED FOR SPEED

Still no codes for Road Rash, but we have found a code for The Need for Speed which gives you three extra views while racing, although you must have two controllers to enter it.

Start the race and choose the inside-the-car view. On the second controller, hold down A and the Left Shift button, and press Up at the same time. These cycle through the new views.

Each simplifies the cockpit view (above) to show more of the road. Only one is really useful.



Graeme Kidd examines some
space-saving programs that go
through your system like
a dose of salts

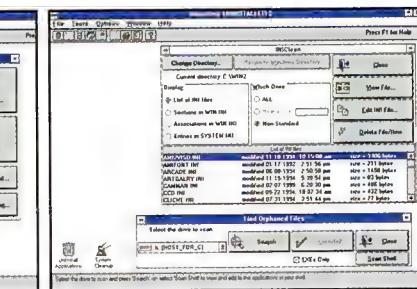
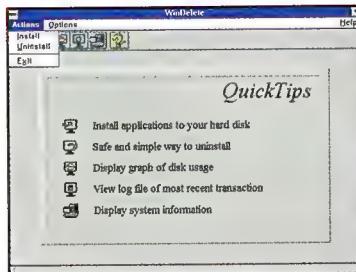
Making a clean sweep

THE 3 NON-CLEANSWEEP PROGRAMS

WinDelete is simple, Uninstall-it! and Uninstall 2 a bit more grown-up...

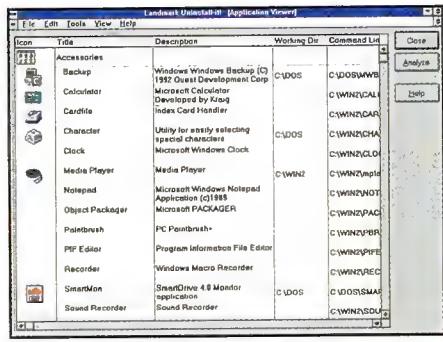
WINDELETE

WinDelete's main aim in life is to act as a gatekeeper to your system. It colourcodes files it finds, to give you recommendations as to what's safe to delete. Here it's examining what's behind the Backup icon in a Windows Accessories window...



UNINSTALL-IT!

Uninstall-it's opening screen. Here, it takes a look at the contents of a hard drive, generating a report on what it finds there.



UNINSTALLER

Uninstaller can be run from its own 'desktop'. Here, the Find Orphaned Files (ones not associated with a Windows icon) window is active, with INIClean waiting in the background.



CONTACT DETAILS

WINDELETE

Price £49.95 (inc VAT)

Contact IMSI 0181 758 1447

UNINSTALL-IT!

Price £51.75 (inc VAT)

Contact Landmark-UK 01908 232350

UNINSTALLER 2

Price £57.58 (inc VAT)

Contact MicroHelp 01273 483979

CLEANSWEEP

Price £46.94 (inc VAT)

Contact Quarterdeck 01245 496699

Until Windows 95 arrives this Autumn, with its Autoplay function, using a CD-ROM on a PC will remain a bit of a lottery. Under the Autoplay protocol, a CD-ROM will start itself up, install everything it needs to run and then remove all its baggage from your hard drive and Windows system files when you exit the program. This technique is known as Zero Footprint Install and is a potentially blissful state of affairs to look forward to.

Today, however, whether you are installing a CD-ROM or an application under Windows you'll be a lucky person indeed if the publisher includes an de-installer routine with the installer program.

The way Windows works at the moment means that programmers can write installer code that messes up your Autoexec.Bat and Config.Sys files, and plays footloose and fancy free with your Windows system files (including System.Ini, Win.Ini and Reg.Dat).

This is a Bad Thing, because unless the programmer provides you with a de-installer, it's difficult to clear out all the stuff that might be left to clutter up your hard drive or slow down your Windows system when you no longer want the software.

Neither Windows nor the documentation that comes with it are particularly helpful when it comes to offering advice on running a clean and tidy system. Unless, of course, you use one of the de-installer utilities written with people like you in mind.

These utilities employ a number of techniques to help you decide which files you should delete – and which you should leave alone.

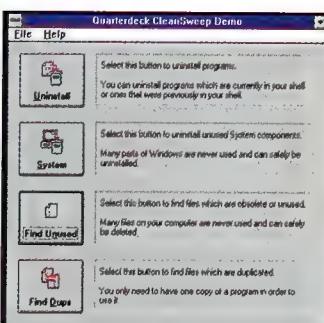
We've tracked down four commercial utilities that sell for 'street prices' between £30 and £50. If you want to make the most of your hard disk space and keep your system in optimum condition, shareware and PD programs can help, but they tend to require rather more technical knowledge, and don't have the bells and whistles of commercial releases. And hey, you want ease of use, don't you?

Unfortunately for multimedia users, until Windows 95 and CD-ROMs written to the Autoplay standard arrive you will continue to be faced with decisions when it comes to deleting Windows applications. Even the smartest utilities can't produce the optimum Windows system with the leanest hard disk without some input from you. Bear in mind, also, that you aren't likely to see massive

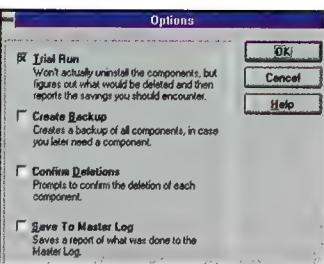


A BRUSH WITH CLEANSWEEP

Good housekeeping is as much about keeping things tidy as chucking out the whole messy caboodle.



The front end of CleanSweep – four buttons, helpfully annotated, take you to the four main functions of the utility: Uninstall, System, Find Unused and Find Duplicates.

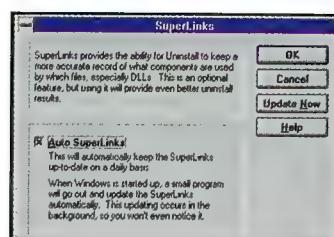


When using one of the four main CleanSweep modules, clicking on the options button calls up this dialog – which allows you to specify what happens when you click the button that starts trashing selected files. Trial run doesn't make the deletions, but tells you what you would delete and how much space you'd save. You can also create a back-up of files before they are deleted, you can have CleanSweep prompt you to confirm before each item is deleted and get it to write details of all changes.

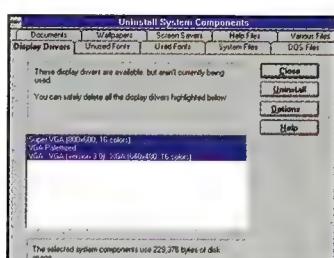


Access the Find Duplicates module and you

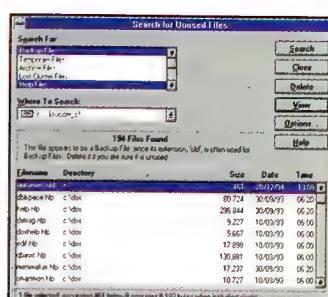
can specify the criteria under which you search for duplicate files. The Where To Search dialog allows you to specify which drives you want to hunt on, and then you have the option to enter a specific file name, or file type extension in the Files Matching window. Execute the search and a list of all duplicate files appears in the main window for you to act upon further.



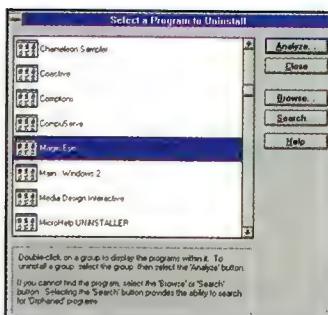
CleanSweep has a SuperLinks facility that helps it keep track of library file (.DLL file) usage. You run the scanner from a pull-down menu, and it updates a database of .DLL file usage. Alternatively, you can active the Auto SuperLinks program, which runs automatically each time you launch Windows.



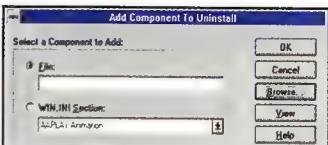
Unused components of Windows system files can not only clog up Windows, impairing performance, they can take up hard drive space like billy-o. The module behind the System button offers a cardbox of ten filetypes – Documents, Display Drivers, Wallpapers, Unused Fonts, Used Fonts, Screen Savers, Help Files, System Files, Dos files – and 'Various Files'. Flipping to one of the cards presents you with a handy reminder of the stuff that's on your drive in the respective category, together with recommendations as to the wisdom of deleting the files.



The Find Unused module helps you track down files that you haven't been using. Once the hunt is complete you can use the View button to peer inside the file if you're unsure what it contains – or check out what CleanSweep has to say about it.

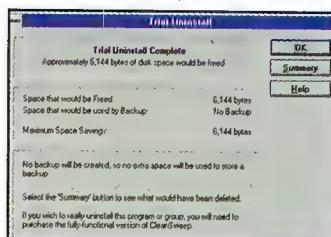


This is what confronts you when you click on the Uninstall button on the opening screen – a list of the Windows groups on your system. Select a group and click the Analyse button to get more details on the files that lie behind it. Alternatively, if you have an idea of what you want to track down and kill, use the Browse button to search for programs by name in a File-Manager-like dialog, or the Search button to look for Windows programs (with or without icons on the desktop) or unused Windows system components.

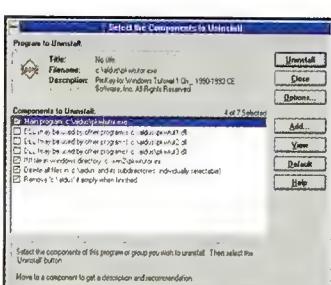


If you choose to Analyse what's behind a program group once you're in the Uninstall

module, this is the kind of result you get. The main window contains a list of the components that make up the group. As you select a file as a candidate for deletion, you get a description and CleanSweep's recommendation on how safe it is to add that component to a deletion run. The Add button allows you to add files or components from elsewhere on your hard drive to a deletion run, and the View button allows you to look inside files that you are unsure of.



Linked with all four modules – this is the trial uninstall. Whenever you ask CleanSweep to do a trial run on a selection of files that you have marked for deletion, it generates a report that not only tells you how much space you will save if you go ahead with a full deletion, it also takes time to remind you whether you have opted to create back-ups. Clicking on the Summary button in this dialog gives you the full rundown of the material you will trash if you do it for real.



Click on the Uninstall button on the main screen and you get a scrollable display of the program groups that CleanSweep has found. You can then Analyse a group in its entirety, or you can double click on a group to reveal the icons that the group holds.

performance gains by keeping Windows tidy – but deletion utilities can help you run a tight ship and will encourage you to find out a bit more about how Windows works.

Our tests revealed CleanSweep as the best of the four commercial programs.

WinDelete is a neat and simple solution to the problem, and acts as a 'gatekeeper' to your Windows machine. Providing you install everything through WinDelete, it can help you

identify what can be deleted safely and what might be removable without causing problems in the future. However, if your system is already a bit of a mess, WinDelete is unlikely to offer the best solution.

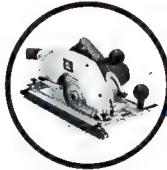
Uninstall-it! and Uninstaller 2 are both a bit more 'grown up', in that they have been around for a while and offer more facilities than the fairly basic WinDelete.

But CleanSweep wins hands down over the

others – it's not only the cheapest, but we found it also offers the most advanced features in the most user-friendly way.

We've included a trial version of CleanSweep on your cover CD, along with a video walkthrough in the Workshop that shows you how to use it.





Internet Tools

So you've been a World Wide Web Wanderer for the last two months using your free Internet access – courtesy of CD-ROM Magazine. You like it, you're hooked and now you want more. Well, the good news is – there is more. Nigel Whitfield togs up to go Telnetting and FTPing



Telnet allows you to connect your PC to another; FTP allows you to transfer files between them.

If you've taken up the *CD-ROM Magazine* offer of free Internet access, chances are that you've spent most of the time browsing around the World Wide Web using the Netscape browser that was included with all the access software.

The Web is certainly one of the most interesting parts of the Internet – and definitely the most colourful – but there's a lot more than just hypertext documents. In fact, when you look at the length of time that the Internet has been around, the World Wide Web is actually very young by comparison.

We'll come back to the Web, and to some of the useful features in the Netscape browser later, but let's take a look at some of the other things that are available with the software from *CD-ROM Magazine*.

Group therapy

Take a look in the Program Manager group that was created when you installed the software for our Internet offer. You'll see a few programs, in addition to the icon for Netscape and for Custom (which is the program you use to dial in to Atlas Internet).

One of these, Newt, isn't anything that you really need to worry about. You'll find it running in the background once you've started your Internet connection, and from its various menus you can



pull down lists of statistics about the connections in and out of your machine. For the casual user, these really aren't important, and Newt can be safely ignored.

The two applications that really are useful – in fact, you'll find them indispensable once you start to use the Internet – are Telnet and FTP.

Telnet is a way of establishing a connection from one PC to another, which can be anywhere on the Internet. And you can type commands into a remote computer just as if you were sitting in front of it.

FTP is for transferring files from one computer to another – either to or from your computer, for instance. It can be used to retrieve any data from anywhere on the Internet, provided that you have the appropriate permission in the form of a user name and password.

That might seem a bit of a blow, but that's been thought of too, and there are thousands of computers around the world that allow what's called anonymous FTP, where anyone can download information. Typically, these contain free programs or information, anything from a library of shareware to the complete works of Shakespeare.

But what's it for?

When people talk about the Internet, they often mention services like IRC (Internet Relay Chat), where you can talk on-line to other people, or gopher, which is a way of finding information by selecting options from menus. Don't worry about not having programs with those names in the *CD-ROM Magazine* set – you'll be able to do just about anything you want to with a combination

of Telnet, FTP and Netscape.

If, for instance, people suggest using gopher to reach an address like [gopher.std.com](gopher://gopher.std.com) all you have to do is click on the Open button in Netscape and type in the gopher address that you've been given, preceded by <gopher://> so our example would become <gopher://gopher.std.com>

IRC can be used just by finding a system that lets you run IRC via Telnet, so you don't have the hassle of installing special software on your machine. One such server is [irc.demon.co.uk](irc://irc.demon.co.uk) – just Telnet there and you can happily chat away to your heart's content.

And – perhaps the most useful thing for *CD-ROM Magazine* readers – you can use Telnet to access services on the Internet that will provide you with electronic mail. You'll usually have to pay a subscription to them, but you generally won't have any phone bills apart from your call to Atlas.

Using Telnet

We've already talked about 'Telnetting to' a place, but how do you do it?

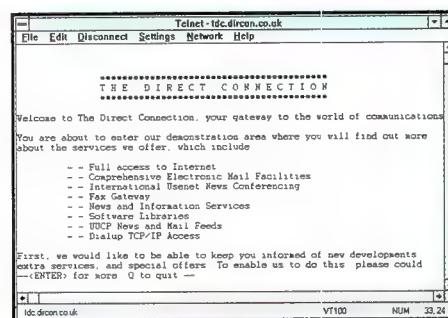
Simple. Double click on the Telnet application in Windows, and pull down the Connect menu. You'll see a dialog box pop up with three fields. The first is the name of the machine that you want to connect to – if you've been told [telnet cix.compulink.co.uk](telnet://cix.compulink.co.uk) type the name in here. The next box is called Port number, and will normally be 23. Unless you know what you're doing, and you've been told to use a different port, leave it be!

The final option selects the type of terminal that Telnet will pretend to be, and should be left set to vt100, which is understood by just about any computer on the Internet; if you Telnet to a machine that asks you what you set this to, vt100 is the best answer to give.

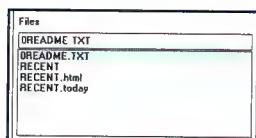
So, Telnet is simple, but where can you go with it? As we said, one way to use it is to connect to a



To connect to a site using Telnet, just click on the Connect item on the menu bar, type its name into this dialog box, then press OK.



Once you're connected, you can type commands into the remote computer. Here we're linked to The Direct Connection, which offers e-mail access and other services.



Once the list of files and directories appears, you can copy a file to your own PC just by

highlighting it in the bottom right window, and then clicking on the left-hand Copy button.

someone else's computer, though.

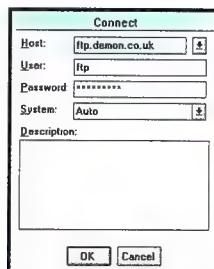
To move between directories, just double click on them, and after a short pause a list of all the available files will appear. You'll often have to work your way down through a series of directories to find the one that you want, but if you know what it's called you can go straight there by typing the name in and clicking on the Change Directory button. For example, if you're connected to ftp.demon.co.uk, enter /pub/libmpc/windows to go straight to the place where Windows-related files are stored.

To transfer a file to your PC, highlight its name in the right-hand window, and then click the copy button nearest the left-hand bottom windows, which will copy it to the selected directory on your own PC. There are a few other options, which are explained in the screenshots, but those are the basic ones.

What next?

If you can do most of the things that you want with the free software we've given you, why would you need anything else? Well, e-mail is

To connect to an FTP server, just click on Connect and then type in the name of the site. You should give a username of **ftp** and a password of **feedback@atlas.co.uk**



obviously one of the most useful things, and by upgrading to a full Internet connection with a complete set of software, you'll be able to read and compose e-mail on your own PC, and then just connect to the Internet to upload it and collect anything that's waiting. Many modern e-mail packages include support for a standard called MIME, which allows you to attach files to your messages – something that's great if, for instance, you're working from home.

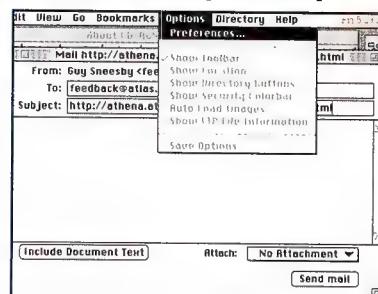
When it comes to choosing a piece of commercial Internet software (or even just a comprehensive selection of shareware or public domain software), the best advice is to ask your Internet provider, especially if you're thinking of spending money on a mail program. They'll be able to recommend programs that work well with their system, and they can help you if you have problems.

Hopefully, you'll have a little of a taster now of what's possible, both with the utilities we've given away free and with a complete Internet connection. If you're definitely hooked on the delights of Webbing and Netting and decide to take the plunge, drop us a line using the address feedback@atlas.co.uk and let us know how you're doing on the Internet.

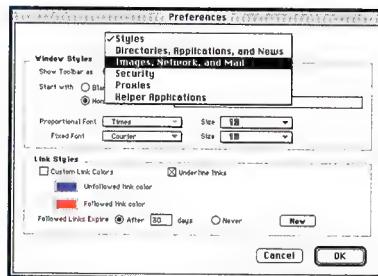
feedback

Although our free Internet offer does not specifically include e-mail, it is possible to send e-mail to [CD-ROM Magazine](http://CD-ROM.Magazine) simply by clicking on the feedback icon in the CD-ROM OnLine home pages. To do this, first you need to set up your preferences from within Netscape by following these simple instructions.

After launching Netscape:

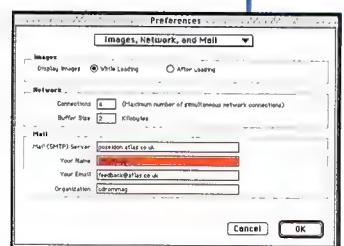


1) Select Preferences from the pull-down Options menu.



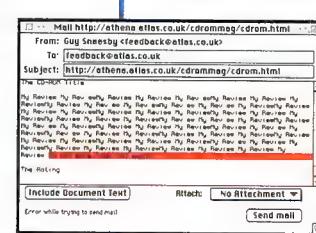
2) Select Images, Network and Mail from the pull-down Style menu. On some Windows browsers, this option will read 'Mail and Proxies'.

3) Enter the following information, customising the name and organisation fields with your individual details. But make sure that your mail server is poseidon.atlas.co.uk and your 'Your email' is set to feedback@atlas.co.uk.



4) Click OK. Now select Save Options from the Options menu to make the changes permanent.

5) Click on the feedback icon on the CD-ROM home page any time you want to send us mail. Or if you want to send mail now, click here feedback@atlas.co.uk. This will take you to the e-mail dialog box. Type your message in the space provided. Click Send. And that's it.



Now we're connected to Demon's FTP server, and we can change to a directory by typing in the name and then clicking on the Change button. pub/libmpc is where some of the most useful files can be found.



TALK TO US

If you have a question on any multimedia issue which needs answering, or if you have any hints or tips which you would like to pass on to other readers, contact us in one of the following ways, marking your submission clearly for the attention of Help.

WRITE to us at Help, CD-ROM Magazine, Dennis Publishing, 19 Bolsover Street, LONDON W1P 7HJ.

FAX us on 0171 917 7680, or send an E-MAIL message to CompuServe account 100034,1005 or through the Internet via feedback@atlas.co.uk

Note: We cannot respond personally to any technical queries by post, phone, fax or e-mail. Suitable letters of interest will be published in CD-ROM Magazine.

CD-ROM Interactive

If you're having problems with your free cover disc, do not contact the editorial team or write in to Help. Please call our technical support line on 0171 917 7693. This service is currently available from 2pm-5.30pm, weekdays only.



CD-ROM On-line

Having difficulties using the internet software provided free with every issue? Service provider Atlas will be more than happy to help out. Give them a call on 0171 312 0401.

CLICKS INTO PLACE



I own a Dan 66MHz 486DX2 with 520Mb hard disk, 8Mb RAM, a Cirrus Logic V-LB video board, with a SoundBlaster Pro and Panasonic CD-562B CD-ROM drive, both of which I fitted myself.

When I run some DOS-based games I get a clicking noise from my sound card. Sometimes this is louder than the actual music or sound effects, and so I end up turning the sound off altogether.

I suppose it's something obvious which I've missed, but I really can't

work out what the problem is. Most games work fine.

Claire Ike, Salford

Getting clicking or crackling sounds from a sound card is quite a common complaint.

The most obvious thing to check is that you have the sound options set up correctly for each of the problem games. Wrongly configured IRQ and DMA settings can cause problems exactly as described. It's also worth experimenting by setting different sound cards. SoundBlaster 16 owners, for instance, should try selecting a standard SoundBlaster or SoundBlaster Pro.

If the sound card settings are not the problem, the chances are that it's your video board which is at fault. You don't say which games are causing you difficulties, but we suspect it's those which use SVGA extended graphic modes, such as Cyclemania, Magic Carpet and Wing Commander III.

Under DOS, extended video modes are achieved in modern VGA boards by using VESA drivers built into the hardware. (Among other things, VESA is the name of a SVGA standard which most boards can support.)

Where the hardware does not support VESA directly in its chipset, it's normally possible to run a software patch supplied with the video card. However, most games which need to use extended graphic modes now support the best known boards by using programs such as UNIVESA which, as the name suggests, provides universal VESA support.

As you may have guessed by now, some VGA cards and VESA programs (including the Cirrus Logic GD-542x range) can cause the problems you

describe. Put simply, the drivers can clash with the sound hardware.

As we have not been able to recreate the problem in our test labs, it's a little difficult for us to try out solutions, although the software vendors we spoke to, suggested that anyone having the clicking problem should contact the manufacturer or supplier of the video board to obtain advice and/or get hold of the most recent VESA drivers available (Cirrus Logic owners

should seek out 542xvga.exe which upgrades the video BIOS to 1.41).

If other readers have similar problems we would like to hear from you, and we'll follow up in a later issue.

Incidentally, there are other possible reasons for distorted sound including using unshielded speakers too close to the monitor of your system, and having the sound card badly positioned in your PC (try moving it away from the power supply and VGA board if you can).



No good at multi-player Doom? Better cheat then, hadn't you?

ULTIMATE DOOM CHEAT?

PC I, like most Doomers, know the basic cheats for the game - IDKFA for all weapons, IDCLEV (and then a number) to change level and so on, but are there any cheats which can be used when playing colleagues at Doom II in Deathmatch mode? I'm fed up with being beaten!

Name supplied, Northampton

Is being beaten at Doom II really so embarrassing that it warrants a request to remain anonymous? Sad, sad, sad.

Anyway, as luck would have it, we can help. There's no cheat for infinite weapons or invincibility in a multi-player game, but it is possible to show your opponent's locations on the in-game map. Good enough?

First, call up the map by pressing Tab. Now while holding down the Right Alt (Gr) key, type the sequence IDDT four times. And that's all there is to it - you'd better just hope that your friends don't read CD-ROM Magazine.

Incidentally, we wouldn't recommend using this on smaller levels, unless you hide, as you'll may get shot while typing in the code. While this cheat will work with the CD-ROM version of the game and the original edition, we know that it doesn't work with the version 1.9 floppy update.



DRIVE TIME

MAC Our company has been offered various Macintosh Quadras and Centris machines via a liquidation company. Before we buy though, we need to know if it is possible to add CD-ROM drives to these machines?

Mike Stowe, Dover

If you want external CD-ROM drives, then the answer is definitely yes.

Internal drives, and the answer is yes, as long as the Quadras aren't 605 or 700 models – all other Mac Quadras and Centris machines have space for internal 5.25in devices.



Adding a CD-ROM drive to most Macs isn't a big problem.

In fact, some models in these ranges are supplied with a CD-ROM drive (AppleCD 300) installed as standard. For those that don't, Apple offers various upgrade kits. Unfortunately, there's not enough room to list all of the models here, but if you call a Mac dealer they should be able to help and supply you with any necessary upgrade kits, whether external or internal.

LOCAL BUS STOP

PC My parents bought me Wing Commander III for Christmas and I've been having major problems getting the game to work with my machine. Although I am able to play the game, I can only run it in standard VGA mode and not SuperVGA. When I attempt to use the latter, the images become corrupted.

Electronic Arts technical support

CD TO MAC DOES GO

MAC Last issue we suggested that it wasn't possible to digitise audio CD sound on a Mac. A number of readers have written in, outlining ways of performing such a task, and we stand corrected. In fact, we've had four weeks to come up with an excuse and we've still drawn a blank (although we did toy with the idea of fobbing you off with some story about piracy).

Anyway, Roger Hill (writing via the Internet) and Bo Walker of Crouch End, London, suggest using a Mac with a recent version of QuickTime (1.6 or later),

and a copy of a movie-playing application such as Apple's Movieplayer or freeware program Popcorn. To record, put the audio CD in the drive, start Movieplayer and then go to the Open dialog box to open a movie. Now select the audio CD and you will be able to choose any of the tracks on the CD, in their entirety or in segments. Hit the Convert button and QuickTime will copy the music from the CD to a new QuickTime music track on your hard disk.

Thanks for writing in guys and once again, sorry for the wrong information. And before PC owners write in – yes, we are fully aware that you can do the same on a PC. We'll be covering that in the future.

service has blamed this on my Diamond Viper VESA Local Bus video board, and say it can't do anything. Do you know what the problem is? The game is great by the way, but it would be even better in SVGA. Please help.

Jim Crawford, Skegness

Wing Commander III pushes the boundaries of PC technology in all sorts of ways and as we warned when we reviewed the game in our February issue, getting the game to work satisfactorily can be a problem.

Electronic Arts has acknowledged that the game has problems with some video boards, including the Diamond Viper VLB (or more specifically, the VPRMODE VESA program) and it is attempting to fix the problem. We would therefore expect a patch disk to be released at some point.

For the time being, you'll have to put up with the VGA mode. If you can't stand this, you should have a pretty good case for getting your game exchanged for something else.



Now you can beat the Rexxons with ease. But do you really want to?

COWERING INFERNO

PC Do you print game cheats? I have some for Inferno (Ocean's space combat game, reviewed in November '94).

When flying, hold down the Right-Shift key and type LOLIFE. The message "Cheat-Enabled" will appear on your Head-up Display and you'll be invincible with unlimited weapons. Also, try pausing the game (using Alt-P) and then press numbers 1 to 7 to get each combat pod.

Don't suppose you have any cheats for Magic Carpet, do you?

Tom Anderson (15), Cambridge

We have no desire to turn into the magazine equivalent of a dodgy tea-time TV show, but we do like to print cheats occasionally. We always like to remind our readers that cheats can seriously ruin a game's enjoyment. We suggest you only use codes if you're completely stuck, or if you've simply had enough.

Anyway, thanks for the Inferno tips. Here are some codes for Bullfrog's rather brilliant Magic Carpet, although we haven't had time to verify that they work.

Bring your carpet to a halt, press I and then type RATTY – this puts you in cheat mode. Now press

Alt and F1 to gain all of the spells, or Alt and F2 to gain manna (we would also guess that the other function keys are worth trying while holding the Alt key). Alternatively, try pressing Shift and C – this completes your current level.



Adding AV capabilities to a non-AV Mac is possible, but buying an AV model in the first place is far, far cheaper.

AV OR NOT AV?

MAC I purchased the non-AV version of a Power Macintosh 8100, but now I'm regretting it. Is it possible to turn it into an AV model, and what hardware and software would I need?

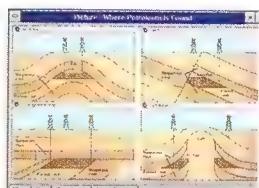
Ms J Kind, Tavistock, Devon

Yes, it is possible to do the conversion. Obviously you'll need to install a Power Macintosh AV card. Aside from that you'll also need a microphone, the plain talk software plus the Audio/Visual utilities that are included on the Power Macintosh CD version 2.0 (you should have received this with your Power Mac).

Bear in mind that for audio visual, you'll also need at least 16Mb of RAM for best results. All in all, it could prove to be a costly upgrade.

Call your local dealer, or try Mac Zone on 0800 393696 for more information.



**Information Finder**

Incorporating all 22 volumes of the World Book Encyclopedia, this is a must for teachers and parents seeking the ultimate encyclopaedia and has to be a contender for the ultimate reference tome.

Price £217 (general public), 179.78 (schools)

Contact World Book-Childcraft International 01892 547811

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DC

Reviewed Issue 5

**JFK Assassination**

Multimedia documentary for conspiracy theorists.

Price £49.95

Contact Gem Distribution 01279 412441

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DC

Reviewed Issue 1

**Macbeth**

A fascinating guide to the Bard's infamous 'Scottish Play'.

Price £51.70

Contact Softline 0181 401 1234

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DC

Reviewed Issue 5

**Microsoft Bookshelf**

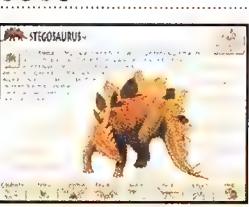
Seven reference works, including *The Concise Columbia Encyclopedia* and an Americanised *Roget's Thesaurus of English Words and Phrases*.

Price Under £85

Contact Microsoft 01734 270000

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DC

Reviewed Issue 2

**Microsoft Dinosaurs**

Contains over 1,000 illustrations and photos, 1,300 articles and animated movies on everyone's favourite prehistoric creatures.

Price Under £45

Contact Microsoft 01734 270000

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DC

Reviewed Issue 2

**PC Computing: How Multimedia Computers Work**

A capacious, informative and interesting look at how your MPC works.

Price £39.99

Contact Mindscape 01444 246333

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DC

Reviewed Issue 5

**People Weekly - 20 Years of Pop Culture**

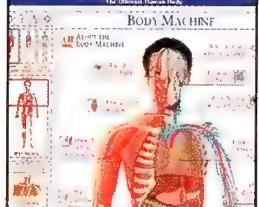
The Bobbitts, Betty Ford, Princess Diana and other major celebrity bitching are among the goodies included in this version of America's famous tabloid magazine.

Price £29.98

Contact Softline 0181 401 1234

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DC

Reviewed Issue 8

**Ultimate Human Body**

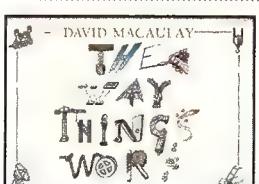
A thorough multimedia exploration of the human body.

Price £79

Contact Dorling Kindersley 0171 753 3488

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DC

Reviewed Issue 3

**Way Things Work**

Dorling Kindersley book on inventions makes an excellent transition to CD-ROM.

Price £79

Contact Dorling Kindersley 0171 753 3488

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DC

Reviewed Issue 3

**Wines Of The World**

A full bodied reference tool that should be to everybody's taste.

Price £35.24

Contact Kamco 0171 916 5301

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DC

Reviewed Issue 1

**Viking Opera Guide**

A CD-ROM version of the lauded Penguin Viking Guide to Opera.

Price £69.33

Contact Attica Cybernetics 01865 791346

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DC

Reviewed Issue 1

**Entertainment**

Alone In The Dark
Brilliant puzzle-solving adventure now also available on 3DO.

Price £39.99

Contact Infogrames 0171 738 8199

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DC

Reviewed Issue 5



Alone In The Dark 2
A worthy and improved sequel with even more locations and puzzles.

Price £44.99

Contact Infogrames 0171 738 8199

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DC

Reviewed Issue 1

**Alone In The Dark 3**

A weird and sinister world of alchemy, Navajo magic and reincarnation is uncovered in the third version of this brilliant game.

Price £49.99

Contact Infogrames 0171 738 8199

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DC

Reviewed Issue 1



Another World
Classic platform game, now converted to 3DO, which follows the adventures of hero, Lester Chaykin.

Price £39.99

Contact Interplay 01235 821666

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DC

Reviewed Issue 4

**Apprentice**

Easy to use platform game which is a bit of a rib tickler.

Price £34.99

Contact Philips Media 0171 911 3000

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DC

Reviewed Issue 1

**Burn:Cycle**

An excellent combination of adventure game, movie and shoot-'em-up.

Price £49.99

Contact Philips Media 0171 911 3000

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DC

Reviewed Issue 1

**Cyberia**

Puzzles, stunning 3D pre-rendered graphics and excellent sound effects are the order of the day here.

Price £49.99

Contact Interplay 01235 821666

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DC

Reviewed Issue 7

**Caesar's World of Boxing**

Your chance to get involved in all aspects of the art of pugilism.

Price £49.99

Contact Philips Media 0171 911 3000

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DC

Reviewed Issue 2

**Caesar's World of Boxing**

Immensely playable tank simulation game which has first class animation and sound.

Price £44.99

Contact US Gold 0121 625 3388

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DC

Reviewed Issue 1

**Chaos Control**

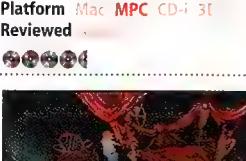
Futuristic frolics from France. Can you, in the role of Jessica Darkhill, prevent aliens from taking over the world?

Price £49.99

Contact Philips Media 0171 911 3000/Virgin 0181 960 2255

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DC

Reviewed Issue 1

**Cluedo**

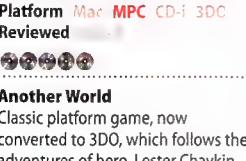
Waddington's whodunnit is now available on CD-i with a cast of stalwart British actors.

Price £39.95

Contact Philips Media 0171 911 3000

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DC

Reviewed Issue 4

**Bugs Bunny Collection**

An assortment of Warner cartoons featuring the legendary rabbit.

Price £17.61

Contact CD Express 0181 518 4151

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DC

Reviewed Issue 1

**Comic Book Confidential**

Traces the history of comics from their inception to the near present.

Price £51.70

Contact Softline 0181 401 1234

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DC

Reviewed Issue 1

**Atmospheres**

Atmospheres for the Amiga, the first CD-ROM to feature 3D sound.

Price £49.99

Contact Philips Media 0171 911 3000

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Reviewed Issue 1

THE GUIDE



Cyclemania

Choice of five race tracks and three modes of play in this motorbike racing game.
Price £39.99
Contact Accolade 0181 788 0200
Platform Mac MPC C
Reviewed



Discworld

Based on the Terry Pratchett series, this is rated as the best adventure game of its genre. Features voices from the likes of Eric Idle and Tony Robinson.
Price £44.99
Contact Psygnosis 0151 709 5755
Platform Mac MPC C
Reviewed

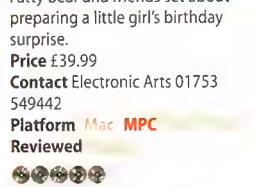


Ecstasia

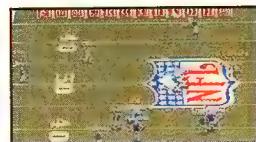
Great animation, innovative character definition, eerie music and the promise of a good beating makes this nightmarish game well worth a try.
Price £44.99
Contact Psygnosis 0151 709 5755
Platform Mac MPC C
Reviewed



Fatty Bear's Birthday Surprise
Fatty Bear and friends set about preparing a little girl's birthday surprise.
Price £39.99
Contact Electronic Arts 01753 549442
Platform Mac MPC C
Reviewed



FPS Baseball '94
Rated as the best baseball game on the PC.
Price £44.99
Contact Sierra 01734 303322
Platform Mac MPC C
Reviewed



FPS Football '95

Highly recommended upgrade of last year's best-selling American football game on the PC.
Price £44.99
Contact Sierra 01734 303322
Platform Mac MPC C
Reviewed



Harry and the Haunted House
Another excellent edutainment title from Broderbund, in which Harry and his pals go in search of their lost ball in a haunted house.
Price £39.99
Contact Electronic Arts 01753 549442
Platform Mac MPC C
Reviewed



Inferno
3D shoot-'em-up has you ridding the universe of the dreaded Rexxons.
Price £49.99
Contact Ocean 0161 832 6633
Platform Mac MPC C
Reviewed



International Tennis Open
Excellent tennis sim game now with a two player option.
Price £44.99
Contact Philips Media 0171 911 3000
Platform Mac MPC C
Reviewed

Jump: The David Bowie Interactive CD-ROM

A multimedia exploration of the singer's *Black Tie White Noise* album.
Price £39.99
Contact Softline 0181 401 1234
Platform Mac
Reviewed

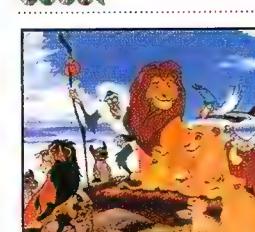


Jump Raven

An ironic eco-friendly shoot-'em-up set in a futuristic New York.
Price £58
Contact Computer Manuals 0121 706 6000
Platform Mac MPC C
Reviewed



King's Quest VII
Wonderful animation and an adventure that will tax the brain more than the previous King's Quest offerings.
Price £44.99
Contact Sierra 01734 303322
Platform Mac MPC C
Reviewed



Lion King
Animated storybook version of the hit feline film.
Price between \$32-\$36
Contact Disney Software 0101 818 543 4372
Platform Mac MPC C
Reviewed

Lilit Divil
Hit the Mutt in search of the Mystic Pizza of plenty.
Price £34.99 (MPC)/£39.99 (CD-i)
Contact Gremlin 0114 753423 (MPC)/Philips Media 0171 911 3000 (CD-i)
Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3D
Reviewed

Little Big Adventure

Escape from the lunatic asylum, defeat Dr Funrock, save the planet and reunite with your other half.
Price £44.99
Contact Electronic Arts 01753 549442
Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3D
Reviewed



John Madden Football
Grid-iron simulation on 3DO for the ultimate touchdown.
Price £39.99
Contact Electronic Arts 01753 549442
Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3D
Reviewed

Mad Dog McCree

Sharpshooting shoot-'em-up.
Price £69.95 (for CD-i; including gun)
Contact Philips Media 0171 911 3000
Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3D
Reviewed

Magic Carpet

Beautiful graphics are the order of the day in this flight sim, shoot-'em-up, strategy game and adventure all rolled into one.
Price £44.99
Contact Electronic Arts 01753 549442
Platform Mac MPC C
Reviewed

Megarace

Much improved conversion from PC to 3DO with enhanced gameplay.
Price £39.99
Contact Mindscape 01444 246333
Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3D
Reviewed

Myst

Role-playing adventure game which really makes you feel part of the action. Stunning graphics.
Price £49.94
Contact Softline 0131 401 1234
Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3D
Reviewed

NASCAR Racing

Indy car racing game... only with stockcars.
Price £44.99
Contact Virgin 0181 960 2255
Platform Mac MPC C
Reviewed

NHL Hockey '95

One of the best PC floppy-based sports games is now given the CD-ROM treatment.
Price £34.99
Contact Electronic Arts 01753 549442
Platform Mac MPC C
Reviewed

Metaltech: Earthsiege

Once again scientists have created robots who have become a bit too big for their boots.
Price £44.99
Contact Sierra 01734 303322
Platform Mac MPC C
Reviewed

Midnight Stranger

Unusual Mac adventure game where you take a trip into a virtual town and organise your own night on the tiles.
Price £45.83
Contact CD Direct 0800 317864
Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3D
Reviewed

Multimedia Strauss

This insight into Strauss is one of the best interactive classical music titles to date.
Price Under £45
Contact Microsoft 01734 270000
Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3D
Reviewed

Out of the Sun

Mac flight sim offering the chance to participate in three WW II battles.
Price £29.99
Contact Domark 0181 780 2224
Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3D
Reviewed

Notropolis

Become a comic strip super hero and defend the city of Notropolis.
Price £49.99
Contact Electronic Arts 01753 549442
Platform Mac MPC C
Reviewed

Pagan: Ultima VIII

A superb role-playing adventure game.
Price £49.99
Contact Electronic Arts 01753 549442
Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3D
Reviewed

Outpost

With planet Earth about to explode now's the time to try your hand at creating a space colony.
Price £49.99
Contact Sierra 01734 303322
Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3D
Reviewed

Mutant Rampage

The first real beat-'em-up arcade game for the CD-i.
Price £39.99
Contact Philips Media 0171 911 3000
Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3D
Reviewed

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Grid-iron simulation on 3DO for the ultimate touchdown.
Price £39.99
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Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3D
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Contact Electronic Arts 01753 549442
Platform Mac MPC C
Reviewed

Notropolis

Become a comic strip super hero and defend the city of Notropolis.
Price £49.99
Contact Electronic Arts 01753 549442
Platform Mac MPC C
Reviewed

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Reviewed

Notropolis

Become a comic strip super hero and defend the city of Notropolis.
Price £49.99
Contact Electronic Arts 01753 549442
Platform Mac MPC C
Reviewed

**PGA Tour Golf 486**

You can almost smell the portaloos in this realistic golf game which tours six famous US courses.

Price £34.99

Contact Electronic Arts 01753 549442

Platform Mac MPC CD-i

Reviewed Issue 4

**♂ Interactive**

Tour of the artist formerly known as Prince's personal life and career.

Price £49.99

Contact Gem Distribution 01279 412441

Platform Mac MPC

Reviewed Issue 2

**Porky Pig**

Series of six cartoons which highlight the early days of Warner's porker.

Price £17.61

Contact CD Express 0181 518 4151

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DC

Reviewed Issue 4

**Putt Putt Goes To The Moon**

The talking car is blasted to the Moon and must perform a number of tasks to return to Earth.

Price £34.99

Contact Softline 0181 401 1234

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DC

Reviewed Issue 4

**Rebel Assault**

An essential shoot-'em-up for Star Wars fans who wish to re-enact the epic complete with a John Williams soundtrack.

Price £39.99

Contact US Gold 0121 625 3388

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DC

Reviewed Issue 4

**Resident's Freak Show**

Join cult San Francisco band The Residents in a multimedia tour of a fantasy freak show.

Price £51.70

Contact Softline 0181 401 1234

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DC

Reviewed Issue 1

**Road Rash**

3DO update of this exciting two wheel, speed racing console game.

Price £44.95

Contact Electronic Arts 01753 549442

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DO

Reviewed Issue 1

**Resident's Gingerbread Man**

Another surreal offering from The Residents, this is a musical study of nine troubled souls.

Price £39.99

Contact BMG Interactive 0171 973 0011

Platform Mac

Reviewed

**Sam & Max Hit The Road**

A rabbit and a dog on the trail of two escapees from a carnival freak show. Sounds weird? It is.

Price £39.99

Contact US Gold 0121 625 3388

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DC

Reviewed Issue 2

**SuperKarts**

Addictive Go-Kart racing game which produces some heart-stopping action.

Price £tba

Contact Virgin Interactive 0181 960 2255

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DC

Reviewed Issue 6

**Samurai Shodown**

Had a bellyful of Street Fighter II games? Here's a great alternative for 3DO owners from Crystal Dynamics.

Price £44.99

Contact BMG Interactive 0171 973 0011

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DC

Reviewed Issue 7

**Super Street Fighter II Turbo**

With the release of the Jean-Claude Van Damme movie imminent, another version of the game hits the streets in this 3DO format.

Price £59.95

Contact Panasonic 0800 444220 or 0500 404041

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DC

Reviewed Issue 7

**7th Guest**

Stunning 3D graphics plus taxing logical puzzles.

Price £49.99

Contact Softline 0181 401 1234

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DC

Reviewed Issue 2

**Space Hulk**

Alien shoot-'em-up set aboard a derelict spaceship and starring some very familiar Extra Terrestrials.

Price £39.99

Contact Electronic Arts 01753 549442

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DC

Reviewed Issue 2

**Star Control II**

An addictive sci-fi adventure game where you trawl through the Universe looking for a way to destroy the enslavers of your people.

Price £19.99 (MPC)/£39.99 (3DO)

Contact Accolade (MPC) 0181 788 0200/BMG (3DO) 0171 973 0011

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DC

Reviewed Issue 6

**Star Trek: 25th Anniversary Enhanced**

Ten separate challenges for the crew of the Starship Enterprise.

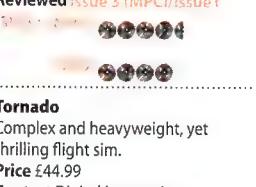
Price £49.99

Contact Interplay Productions

01235 821666

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DC

Reviewed Issue 1 (MPC)/Issue 4 (3DO)

**Theme Park**

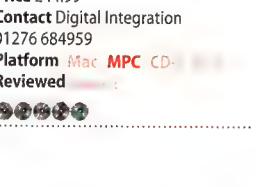
Become horribly, hugely rich by designing the best theme park in the Universe.

Price £34.99

Contact Electronic Arts 01753 549442

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DC

Reviewed Issue 3 (MPC)/Issue 4 (3DO)

**Tornado**

Complex and heavyweight, yet thrilling flight sim.

Price £44.99

Contact Digital Integration 01276 684959

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DC

Reviewed Issue 1

**Vid Grid**

Videos from the likes of Metallica and Soundgarden are rearranged into a sliding block jigsaw puzzle, your job is to restore them to their former glory.

Price £34.95

Contact Jasmine Multimedia 0101 818 343 6365

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DC

Reviewed Issue 3

**Total Eclipse**

3D shoot-'em-up in space with some particularly nasty aliens.

Price £49.99 (import)

Contact Tottenham Court Road Computer Exchange 0171 636 2666

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DC

Reviewed Issue 1

**Twisted Game Show**

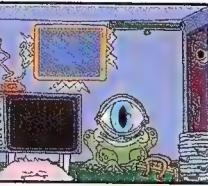
Fun for all the family with this surreal game show.

Price £39.99

Contact Electronic Arts 01753 549442

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DC

Reviewed Issue 1

**Ultimate Haunted House**

Adventure game for children which requires puzzles to be solved for rewards to be gained.

Price Under £45

Contact Microsoft 01734 270000

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DC

Reviewed Issue 7

**Under A Killing Moon**

The closest thing yet to an interactive movie has you in the role of Tex Murphy, private investigator.

Price £59.95

Contact US Gold 0121 625 3388

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DC

Reviewed Issue 3

**AT-AT Les**

Excellent flight sim with magnificent graphics, but definitely for those with a powerful PC.

Price £49.99

Contact Electronic Arts 01753 549442

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DC

Reviewed Issue 6

**Vid Grid**

Videos from the likes of Metallica and Soundgarden are rearranged into a sliding block jigsaw puzzle, your job is to restore them to their former glory.

Price £34.95

Contact Jasmine Multimedia 0101 818 343 6365

Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DC

Reviewed Issue 3



THE GUIDE



Virtual Tarot

Read 'em and weep. Your future in the cards. Great graphics and music.
Price £55.53
Contact KimTec 01202 888873
Platform Mac MPC

Reviewed



Wacky Races

The magnificent racing cartoon of the '70s, featuring Dick Dastardly and Penelope Pitstop, is resurrected for CD-ROM.
Price Mac version £TBA;
3DO version £25.
Contact Mac version - DirekTek 0181 845 5969; 3DO version - TCR Computer Exchange 0171 636 2666
Platform Mac 3DO

Reviewed

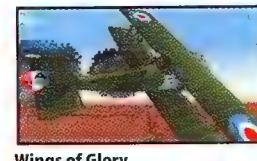


Wing Commander III

Final part of the classic space trilogy, which stars Mark Hamill of *Star Wars* fame and cost a reputed \$4 million to make.

Price £49.99
Contact Virgin 0181 960 2255
Platform MPC

Reviewed



Wings of Glory

World War 1 combat flight sim.
Price £39.99
Contact Electronic Arts 01753 549442

Platform MPC

Reviewed



X-Wing Collector's CD-ROM
Star Wars collector's CD-ROM with 122 missions of classic space combat.

Price £49.99
Contact Virgin 0181 960 2255
Platform MPC

Reviewed



Platform: Digital Video, VideoCD

Digital Video is a proprietary Philips CD Video format that works only on CD-i players and a select few multimedia PC CD-ROM drives.

VideoCD is designed to work on all CD-based machines, but requires an additional MPEG playback card, and these are currently available only for CD-i and Multimedia PCs.



Above The Law

Fifty-odd minutes of collisions, crashes, thrills and spills "selected from top quality motor sport".

Price £12.99
Contact CD Vision 0181 503 0589
Platform Digital Video VideoCD

Reviewed



Alive

True story of how 19 people survived an air crash for 62 days in a South American mountain range.

Price £17.99
Contact Philips Media 0171 911 3000
Platform Digital Video VideoCD

Reviewed



Apocalypse Now

Francis Ford Coppola's ground-breaking film about Vietnam starring Marlon Brando and Martin Sheen.

Price £17.99
Contact Philips 0181 689 4444
Platform Digital Video VideoCD

Reviewed



Crying Game
Stephen Rea is an IRA terrorist who is on the run and finds refuge in the arms of a cabaret singer in this thriller with a sting in its tale.

Price £17.99
Contact Philips Media 0171 911 3000
Platform Digital Video VideoCD

Reviewed



David Bowie: The Video Collection

Twenty five videos make up this collection of greatest hits ranging from *Space Oddity*, *Let's Dance*, *China Girl* to *Fame '90*.

Price £19.99
Contact Philips Media 0171 911 3000
Platform Digital Video VideoCD

Reviewed



Carreras, Domingo, Pavarotti in Concert

The three great tenors in fine voice in a concert recorded in the run-up to the World Cup Italia '90.

Price £17.99
Contact Philips Media 0171 911 3000
Platform Digital Video VideoCD

Reviewed



Dr. No

The first of the James Bond films looks good here on VideoCD for its 30 years.

Price £49.99 (part of a three-title set)
Contact Philips Media 0171 911 3000
Platform Digital Video VideoCD

Reviewed



Eyewitness: Cat

Jointly produced by the BBC and Dorling Kindersley, this expounds a range of information on cats from your common-or-garden moggy to their more ferocious lion family.

Price £9.99
Contact CD Vision 0181 503 0589
Platform Digital Video VideoCD

Reviewed



Eyewitness: Horse

Potted selection of facts and trivia pertaining to the four-legged beasts.

Price £9.99
Contact CD Vision 0181 503 0589
Platform Digital Video VideoCD

Reviewed



Eyewitness: Shark

Exciting and entertaining, this documentary also proves to be educational in explaining the many myths surrounding these creatures.

Price £9.99
Contact CD Vision 0181 503 0589
Platform Digital Video VideoCD

Reviewed



The Firm

John Grisham's 800-page thriller becomes the first three-disc VideoCD and has an all-star line-up including Gene Hackman, Tom Cruise and Ed Harris.

Price £19.99
Contact Philips 0181 689 4444
Platform Digital Video VideoCD

Reviewed



From Russia With Love

Arguably the best of the Bond movies and the first to feature Q for the home team and Blofeld for the away side.

Price £49.99 (part of a three-title set)
Contact Philips Media 0171 911 3000
Platform Digital Video VideoCD

Reviewed



Goldfinger

One of the more popular Bond films with Mr Connery as the suave and sophisticated 007.

Price £49.99 (part of a three-title set)
Contact Philips Media 0171 911 3000
Platform Digital Video VideoCD

Reviewed

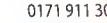


Hunt for Red October

CD-i version of the hit movie about a Soviet submarine that goes AWOL.

Price £15.99
Contact Philips Media 0171 911 3000
Platform Digital Video VideoCD

Reviewed



Kate Bush - The Whole Story '94
Welling's favourite daughter captured on VideoCD.

Price £19.99
Contact Philips Media 0171 911 3000
Platform Digital Video VideoCD

Reviewed

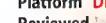


Keep The Faith: An Evening With Bon Jovi

Taken from an MTV special this is a double CD-i of live footage.

Price £15.99
Contact Philips Media 0171 911 3000
Platform Digital Video VideoCD

Reviewed

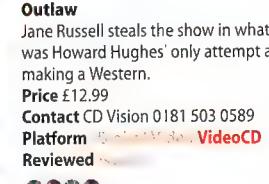


Naked Gun

More corny capers with Police Squad Detective Frank Drebin.

Price £17.99
Contact Philips Media 0171 911 3000
Platform Digital Video VideoCD

Reviewed



Outlaw

Jane Russell steals the show in what was Howard Hughes' only attempt at making a Western.

Price £12.99
Contact CD Vision 0181 503 0589
Platform Digital Video VideoCD

Reviewed

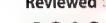


Premiere Collection Encore: Andrew Lloyd Webber

A montage of Mr Webber's most famous tunes.

Price £15.99
Contact Philips Media 0171 911 3000
Platform Digital Video VideoCD

Reviewed



Queen - Greatest Flix I & II

30-plus videos in this disc set, accompanied by a 16-page booklet.

Price £24.99
Contact PMI 0171 486 4488
Platform Digital Video VideoCD

Reviewed

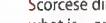


Raging Bull

Scorsese directs and De Niro stars in what is – arguably – the best boxing movie ever made.

Price £17.99
Contact Philips Media 0171 911 3000
Platform Digital Video VideoCD

Reviewed



Rolling Stones Live at the Max

Satisfaction guaranteed with Mick and the boys from their Steel Wheels tour.

Price £24.99
Contact Castle Multi Media 0181 974 1021
Platform Digital Video VideoCD

Reviewed





Sarah Vaughan - The Divine One
This VideoCD charts the life, times and music of the famous jazz singer.
Price £14.99
Contact CD Vision 0181 503 0589
Platform Digital Video VideoCD
Reviewed Issue 4



Satchmo
The great Louis Armstrong's music portrayed in over a dozen classic performances.
Price £12.99
Contact CD Vision 0181 503 0589
Platform Digital Video VideoCD
Reviewed Issue 4



Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country

Another successful outing for the Starship Enterprise's Kirk, Spock and crew as they return to assist the age old enemy, the Klingons. It's a funny old Universe.
Price £15.99
Contact Philips Media 0171 911 3000
Platform Digital Video VideoCD
Reviewed Issue 2



Ten Summoner's Tales

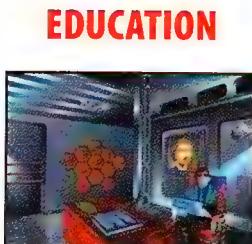
Warts and all record of how the ex-Police man and his muso friends set about making his solo album last year.
Price £17.99
Contact Philips Media 0171 911 3000
Platform Digital Video VideoCD
Reviewed Issue 4



Thelma and Louise
Geena Davis and Susan Sarandon deliver two excellent performances in this defiant road movie about two women on the run. It's directed by Ridley Scott.
Price £17.99
Contact Philips Media 0171 911 3000
Platform Digital Video VideoCD
Reviewed Issue 7



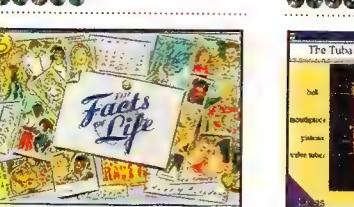
EDUCATION



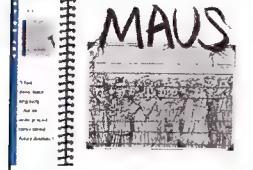
Brief History of Time
Stephen Hawking's best-selling book is given the CD-ROM treatment, the result being an amusing and educational guide to some of the most complicated issues of our time.
Price £TBA
Contact Creative Labs 0101 408 428 2346
Platform Mac MPC CD 3DO
Reviewed Issue 2



Facts of Life
A multimedia disc that dispels the rumours surrounding the subject of sex education.
Price £128.08
Contact Projection Visual Communications 0171 250 1706
Platform Mac MPC CD 3DO
Reviewed Issue 3



Musical World Of Professor Piccolo
Let the Professor take you on a guided tour of the rudiments of his musical world.
Price \$59.95
Contact Opcode Interactive 0101 415 494 1112
Platform Mac MPC CD 3DO
Reviewed Issue 4



Complete Maus
Documentary detailing the harrowing experiences of a holocaust survivor, as told by his son, Art Spiegelman.
Price £51.70
Contact Softline 0181 401 1234
Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DO
Reviewed Issue 2



Cyberboogie
This DIY musical disc, aimed at three to six-year-olds, is CD-ROM's answer to TV's *Rainbow*.
Price \$49.95
Contact Ehrlich Multimedia 0101 201 397 8866
Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DO
Reviewed Issue 6



Dangerous Creatures
Edutainment title which chronicles the life and times of some of the nastiest creatures on Earth.
Price under £45
Contact Microsoft 01734 270000
Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DO
Reviewed Issue 4



Distant Suns
A core database of 9,824 stars and the Hubble Guide star catalogue.
Price £99.95
Contact Meridian 0181 543 3500
Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DO
Reviewed Issue 2



How Things Work

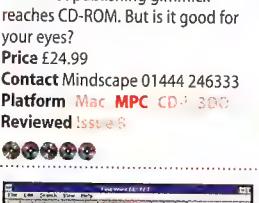
An entertaining and detailed look at the history of inventions.
Price £35.24
Contact Active Distribution 0181 838 1280
Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DO
Reviewed Issue 1



Macmillan Dictionary for Children
Over 12,000 illustrated words, pronunciations and definitions in this excellent multimedia dictionary.
Price £24.95
Contact Ablac 01626 332333
Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DO
Reviewed Issue 6

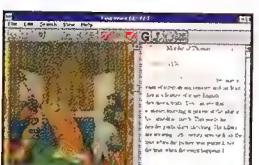


Paper Planes
What the CD-ROM drive was made for... a title aiding you in the construction of paper planes.
Price £19
Contact Word Perfect 0800 177277
Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DO
Reviewed Issue 8



Magic Eye
The latest publishing gimmick reaches CD-ROM. But is it good for your eyes?

Price £24.99
Contact Mindscape 01444 246333
Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DO
Reviewed Issue 8



Medieval Realms
The result of a partnership between The British Library and the Open University, Medieval Realms contains almost 1,500 records, including manuscripts and secular music, from the period between 1066 and 1500.
Price £176.25
Contact Turpin 01462 625555
Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DO
Reviewed Issue 7



Ruff's Bone
Ruff the dog's goes in search of his Sunday bone.
Price £34.99
Contact Electronic Arts 01753 549442
Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DO
Reviewed Issue 4



My First Incredible Amazing Dictionary
Combines 1,000 words and definitions with colourful artwork.
Price £49
Contact Dorling Kindersley 0171 753 3488
Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DO
Reviewed Issue 1



Paper Planes
What the CD-ROM drive was made for... a title aiding you in the construction of paper planes.
Price £19
Contact Word Perfect 0800 177277
Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DO
Reviewed Issue 8



Peter Pan
Interactive storybook version based on the classic novel.
Price £39.99
Contact Electronic Arts 01753 549442
Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DO
Reviewed Issue 1



Redshift
A personal planetarium on CD-ROM, with images of planets, stars and the Penguin Dictionary of Astronomy. Stunning photography.
Price £64.63
Contact Kimte 01202 888873
Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DO
Reviewed Issue 2



Ruff's Bone
Ruff the dog's goes in search of his Sunday bone.
Price £34.99
Contact Electronic Arts 01753 549442
Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DO
Reviewed Issue 4

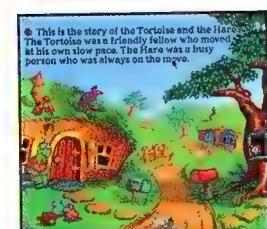




Scooter's Magic Castle
Join Scooter the elf in an exploration of his magic castle.
Price £34.99
Contact Softline 0181 401 1234.
Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3DO
Reviewed Issue 15

3-D Dinosaur Adventure
Educational, entertaining, learning aid aimed primarily at kids.

Price £44.95
Contact Guildsoft 01752 895100
Platform Mac MPC
Reviewed



Wiggins in Storyland
Fun and imaginative title that works as an excellent multimedia authoring tool for children, as well as an interactive book.

Price \$59
Contact Media Vision 0101 510 252 4282
Platform Mac MPC C
Reviewed



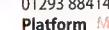
Shipwreck
An animated edutainment which is aimed at teaching the principles of electricity.
Price £24.99
Contact Philips Media 0171 911 3000
Platform Mac MPC CD-i
Reviewed Issue 15



Sources of Faith
Seven religions and cultures of the world explained.
Price £76.24
Contact KimTec 01202 888873
Platform Mac MPC C
Reviewed Issue 15



Space AGE
Encyclopaedia of the space programme starting with the rocket hobbyists of the early 20th Century through to a look at future Mars mission.
Price £43.48
Contact National CD-ROM Company 01293 884146
Platform Mac MPC
Reviewed Issue 8



Space for Windows
History of spacecraft and exploration, hosted by Patrick Moore, makes an excellent introduction to astronomy.
Price £49.99
Contact Andromeda Interactive 01235 529595
Platform Mac MPC CD
Reviewed Issue 7



Tortoise And The Hare, The
Beautifully animated version of the Aesop fable. The main aim is to improve the child's reading skills through word recognition.

Price £39.99
Contact Electronic Arts 01753 549442
Platform Mac
Reviewed



Ultimate Noah's Ark
Not only offers the chance to win a prize by pairing off animals to find the odd one out, but acts as a reference work.

Price £24.99
Contact Philips Media 0171 911 3000
Platform Mac MPC CD-i
Reviewed Issue 3



Vietnam
The story behind America's longest and most damaging war is recorded here in this superb guide.

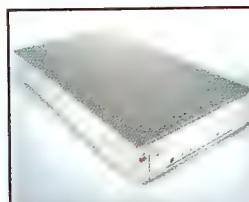
Price £53.95
Contact Computer Manuals 0121 706 6000
Platform Mac MPC
Reviewed



War Planes 1975-94
A military encyclopaedia that's not just for flight buffs.
Price £52.95
Contact Maris 0171 488 1566
Platform Mac MPC CD-i 3
Reviewed

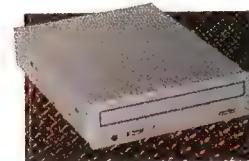


HARDWARE CD-ROM DRIVES



Apple CD300 e Plus
This is a low-cost, high-performance CD-ROM drive (internal and external).

Price £229.13
Contact Apple 0800 127753
Platform Mac MPC
Reviewed



Hitachi CDR 6550
This is a high speed, low cost baby brother to the classy but expensive CDR 6750. Aimed squarely at the small home office market.

Price £193.87, optional SCSI interface £123.38
Contact Hitachi 0181 849 2092
Platform Mac MPC
Reviewed



Nakamichi MBR-7
A seven CD disc changer and CD ROM drive, at a surprisingly low cost and very handy for parties.
Price £351.33
Contact CD Revolution 01932 562000
Platform Mac MPC
Reviewed

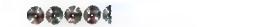


NEC Multispin 4x Pro
Fully featured quad-speed drive offering a sleek design.
Price £849 (RRP);
Contact NEC 0181 993 8111
Platform Mac MPC
Reviewed



Pioneer 602x
Squeezes a six-CD changer and a double-speed CD-ROM drive into a compact external drive casing.

Price £645
Contact Pioneer 01753 789789
Platform Mac MPC
Reviewed



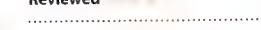
Wearnes CDD-120A
A new breed of cheap, easy-to-install IDE CD-ROM drive.

Price £128.08
Contact Wearnes 01727 836330
Platform Mac MPC
Reviewed

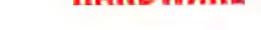


Wearnes CDD-120X
Similar in looks to the CDD-120A and similarly easy to install IDE CD-ROM drive from Wearnes. Promises to eliminate jerky video and make playing mainstream CD titles convenient.

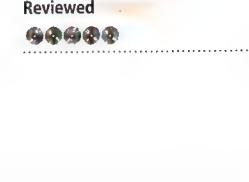
Price £128.08
Contact Wearnes 01727 836330
Platform Mac MPC
Reviewed



ACE Movie Master
A new range of ACE MPEG boards.
Price Movie Master TV £233.83; Movie Master 15 £280.83; Movie Master 24 £386.58
Contact ACE 01952 293333
Reviewed Issue 4



Apple AV 14 Display
14-inch multimedia monitor which can accept input from an external sound source, an internal mic and even an external video source.
Price £387.75
Contact Apple 0800 127753
Reviewed



Aiwa TS-D20
Excellent, but expensive, three-box speaker system with built-in 20 watt amplifier and independent volume and bass controls as well as power-saving stand-by mode. Well recommended.

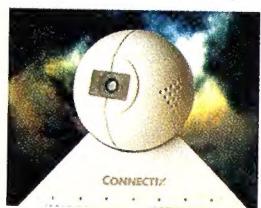
Price £129.99
Contact Aiwa 0181 897 7000
Reviewed



Apple Multimedia Kit
Turns a Mac or Windows PC into an interactive multimedia entertainment centre. It will play audio CDs, Photo CD discs and QuickTime movies, as well as interactive films.

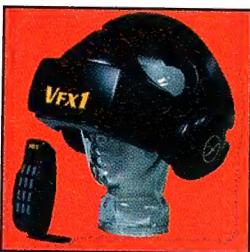
Price £350 (Mac); £390 (Windows)
Contact Apple 0800 127753
Reviewed



**Connectix QuickCam**

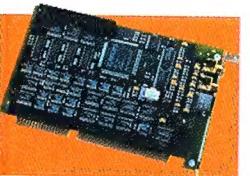
A remarkably cheap and versatile digital video camera that puts instant movies on the Mac.
Price £163.32
Contact Computers Unlimited 0181 200 8282

Reviewed Issue 7



Forte VFX1 HMS
Virtual Reality reaches the home with this easy to use and install headset and controller.
Price Around \$1,000
Contact Zye Technology 01293 538666
Reviewed Issue 4

Gravis Phoenix
Surreal looking, easy to use flight and weapons control system for serious 'flight simmers'.
Price £141
Contact Zye Technology 01293 538666
Reviewed Issue 5



Miro Video DC1 TV
The quality and clarity of the capture of this grabber makes this suitable for aspiring multimedia professionals.
Price £703.83 with VideoStudio (MPC)
Contact Miro 0181 831 0467
Reviewed Issue 4

Movie Machine Pro
As well as video overlay and frame grabbing facilities, you can also keep up with the soaps, via a TV tuner.
Price £581.63 (MPC)
Contact FAST Electronic 0171 221 8024
Reviewed Issue 4

Multivideo System (with Chromakey)
Single frame capture board which combines your computer background and video footage in one step.
Price £699.13 (MPC)
Contact Vine Micros 01843 225714
Reviewed Issue 4

**Panasonic Jet CF-41**

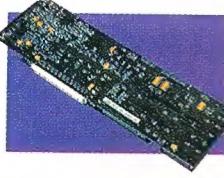
Multimedia on the move with this new Panasonic notebook.
Price £4,499
Contact Panasonic 0500 404041
Reviewed Issue 8



Apple Macintosh Performa 630
Turn on and tune in with the ultimate multimedia Mac.
Price £1,599
Contact Apple 0800 127753
Reviewed Issue 3

**Panasonic Jet Notebook**

The first notebook PC to incorporate a 'multimedia pocket' for CD-ROM.
Price £4,993.75 (including CD-ROM drive and sound card)
Contact Panasonic 01344 853598
Reviewed Issue 2



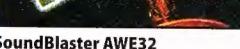
Radius Videovision Studio Pro
The darling of multimedia developers working with full motion video.
Price £5,697.58 (Mac)
Contact Radius 01483 772773
Reviewed Issue 4



3DO REAL Interactive
Stunning 3DO CD games console.
Price Around £500
Contact Panasonic UK 01344 853598
Reviewed Issue 1



ScreenBeat 3
Cheap, battery-powered speakers. A worthy introduction to low-priced multimedia.
Price £15.99
Contact Simply Computers 0181 523 4020
Reviewed Issue 8



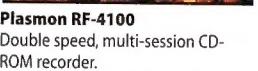
Personal RomMaker
CD-ROM disc mastering system.
Price £7,631.63
Contact JVC Professional 0181 896 6000
Reviewed Issue 1



SoundBlaster AWE32
Slightly shaky on Roland emulation in games but very good for musos.
Price £235
Contact Creative Labs 01734 344322
Reviewed Issue 3



Ultrasound Max
12.5 inches of quality. The Ultrasound Max now has 512k RAM, three CD-ROM interfaces and updated emulation software.
Price £233.83
Contact Zye Technology 01293 438666
Reviewed Issue 3



Sound FX Classic 3000
Plays GM or Roland sounds simultaneously with SoundBlaster emulation. Very easy to use.
Recommended.
Price £176.18
Contact Bluepoint 01908 277007
Reviewed Issue 3



VideoLogic 928 Movie
Fast, high-resolution graphics and built-in sound for PCs. Video for Windows movies can be expanded to full-screen resolution without the loss of frame rate. And, there's an MPEG option, too.
Price £351.33 without sound, £468.83 with sound chip
Contact Videologic 01923 260511
Reviewed Issue 2

Spea Showtime

Solid, 24-bit MPEG decoder that combines controller software with smooth video and audio performance.
Price £393.63

Contact Spea 01844 261886
Reviewed Issue 5

**Videologic MPEG Player**

Accessory for the VideoLogic 928Movie and PCI Movie cards which plays MPEG video with customisable colour, brightness and contrast levels.
Price MPEG Player (requires 928 Movie card) £292.58/single-board option £586.33

Contact Videologic 01923 260511
Reviewed Issue 5

**Vine Micros TVGamer**

A rather special lead which enables you to relay PC games to a standard television.
Price £49.95

Contact Vine Micros 01843 225714
Reviewed Issue 6

Visionetics MPEG Master

Value for money and easy to use 24-bit MPEG card.
Price £233.83

Contact CD Revolution 01932 562000
Reviewed Issue 5

**Wharfedale Modus Cube**

"Alive and natural" sounding passive speakers from the company synonymous with hi-fi products.
Price £59

Contact Wharfedale 01132 601222
Reviewed Issue 8

**Yamaha CDR100**

A high-speed CD-R mastering machine.
Price Under £7,000

Contact Computers Unlimited 0181 200 8282
Reviewed Issue 2

**Yamaha YST-M10**

These speakers are at home with anything a multimedia machine can throw at it.
Price £69

Contact Yamaha Kemble 01908 366700
Reviewed Issue 8





A CD-ROM In The Life Of...

In the interests of science only, you understand, Jim Smith tries his hand at Intercourse – that's sex on the Net to you.

Since I signed up to the global network just over a year ago I've had sex with two people, got into numerous arguments, made a complete prat of myself on more than one occasion and been bored stupid by any number of tedious loonies.

The sex thing, though, is an exceptionally bizarre part of the whole phenomenon: it is remarkably easy to find someone to have sex with on the Internet, so long as you don't mind missing out on the little things, like touch, smell, taste, knowing what your partner looks like, or what sex they are (the orgasm bit, by the way, is left entirely to your own, erm, devices.)

Calling it sex is actually going a bit far, what we're really talking about here is a mutual fantasy between two strangers, a bit like a drunken night at the North Star pub, but without having to take a shower in the morning.

There are, for example, few real women in cyberspace (that's because there are few real men – Ed.). And fewer still who want to talk dirty on the Internet's CB network Internet Relay Channel or IRC. So the thousands of pustulent 19-year-old geeks who cram onto the IRC when

college finishes for the day get around this problem by pretending to be women and going out and having sex on the IRC hotspots, chat groups with names like #fuck, #netsex, #cum and so on.

One of the funniest things I saw last year was somebody's signature tag that read: "On the Internet, nobody knows you're a dog". Reverse that out, I suppose, and it says: "On the Internet everybody knows you're a friendless sexual inadequate." But are these people – me included – really the seedy perverts they're often

more precise it, has been happening in one form or another for over a hundred years. The Victorians apparently experimented with the stimulating abilities of static electricity; Catherine the Great died in a sexual technology accident involving a horse and a harness; and I suppose you could make a case for Wilhelm Reich's orgone accumulator as a sex device, except it never worked.

Sex and technology are becoming increasingly confused. The number one sexual goddess of our time, Pamela Anderson, was not so much a perfect woman as a sexual cyborg knocked together out of silicone and old sleeper rivets. Anderson has been

Milk Tray. One disturbing part of the netsex craze is that, although all you're actually doing is trading a few choice phrases over a computer network ("I'd like to rub your body with marmite and lick it off," "Ooh, feels good, do the malt extract thing, you slavish love puppy..."), most people actually seem to feel they're having a new kind of sex.

My own experiences have been less than epoch-making. One time I wandered into a full-on network orgy. I didn't feel indignant outrage as I was logged in to #orgy channel at the time. Modesty forbids me to say much more except that whips, 12in ivory ornaments and peppermint foot lotion were involved. The second time I ended up talking to somebody who was at work and had to keep breaking off to answer the telephone, which was a bit too much like the real thing for my liking.

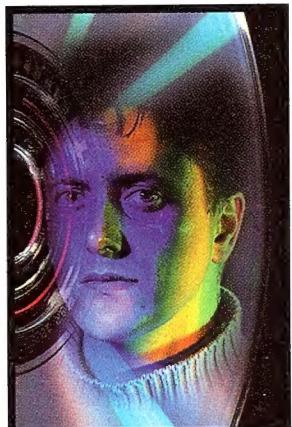
Still, at least netsex is safe.

As a barrier to unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases the Atlantic Ocean takes some beating, and it does tickle that most erogenous zone in the human body: the imagination.

Perhaps the fractalising of sex into all sorts of different experiences is the healthiest sign yet that the technology is taking root and doing something strange but positive to the human condition.

Or perhaps not.

Next month Jim Smith tries to find the toilets in a virtual McDonald's...



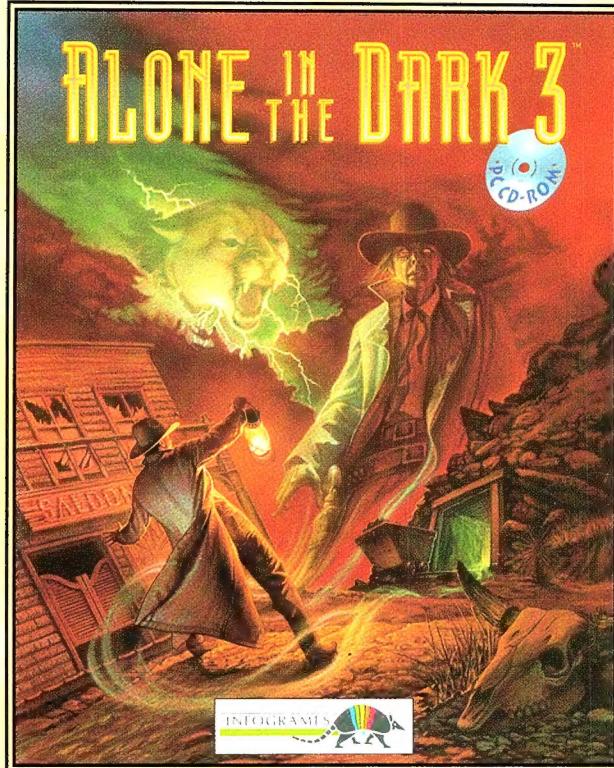
"As a barrier to unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, the Atlantic takes some beating."

made out to be?

The fixation with the idea that sex might be somehow enhanced by future technologies began back in the 1960s, with the infamous orgasm torture machine in *Barbarella* somehow defining the idea. Woody Allen's *Orgasmatron* picked up the ball and ran with it, and today television magazine programmes like *Visions of Heaven & Hell* perpetuate the myth that it's all waiting for you, there on the technological horizon. In fact, it's happening now. Or to be

sexually enhanced – augmented – beyond what is possible for simple genetics to achieve. (If you don't believe me, download the pre-op pics.) And just as Pamela Anderson is a technological goddess, perhaps it is appropriate that sex should be seen as happening over thousands of miles of high-bandwidth cabling rather than through the unreliable medium of satin sheets and a box of

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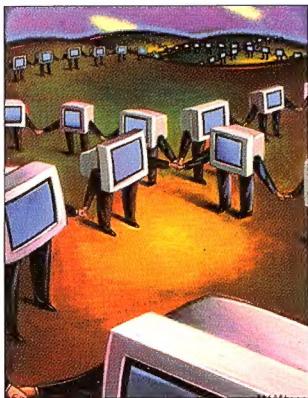
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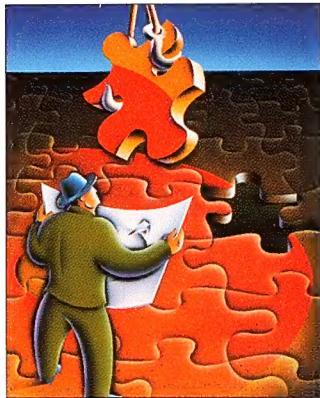
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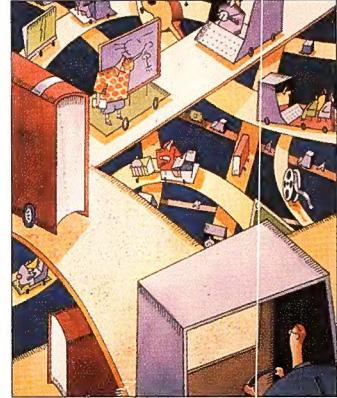
Network utilities: vital, but set aside 100K



MS-DOS® 6 utilities: handy, but about 120K



Multimedia: fun, but can you spare 50-80K?



Internet utilities: where will you get 120K?

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490K or so to use. But QEMM® 7.5 routinely returns 634K of conventional memory. And when you consider as little as one 'K' of memory makes the difference between a program loading or not, you can see where an additional 140K or so could be vital.

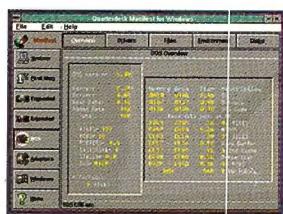
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